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TURKEY IN AGONY

(TURQUIE AGONISANTE)

Translated from the French of

PIERRE LOTI.

TURKEY IN AGONY

Translated from the French of

PIERRE LOTI,

Member of the Académie Française

BY

BEDWIN SANDS.

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The Ottoman Committee wish to express their most earnest thanks to 'Pierre Loti,' who has kindly waived his Author's rights over this translation, to the translator, who, as a Member of the Ottoman Committee, has given his services gratuitously, and to those private persons whose generosity alone rendered its publication possible.

The "African Times and Orient Review" Publishing Co., Ltd., have shown their practical sympathy with the work of the Committee by publishing the book without fee.

THE OTTOMAN COMMITTEE.

President :

THE RIGHT HON. LORD MOWBRAY AND STOURTON.

Hon. Sec. - - - ELLIS SCHAAP.

Assistant Hon. Sec. - ARTHUR J. FIELD.

OBJECTS.

1. To resist encroachments upon the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.
 2. To emphasize the strategical and commercial importance of that integrity to the British Empire.
 3. To maintain the friendship of Britain with the Ottoman Empire, and to promote a cordial understanding between Turks, Arabs and Britons.
-

The Editor of the "African Times and Orient Review" having kindly given the use of his offices *pro tem.* to the Ottoman Committee, all communications are to be addressed to 158, Fleet Street, E.C. Due notice will be given of any change of offices.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

If Pierre Loti considered that his admirable letters needed an apology for being written in feverish haste, straight from a heart full of indignation and sorrow, how much more does the English rendering necessitate weighty justification, since much of the fire and enthusiasm of the original will perforce be missed in a foreign language.

My justification for this, a labour of love, is that not every day can one find a writer, enjoying the world-wide fame of Pierre Loti, ready to uphold justice and fair-play *coûte que coûte*. This volume is published under the auspices of the Ottoman Committee and for the purpose of a propaganda which is avowedly of a distinctly Turkophile nature.

Following the activities of the Balkan Committee, it was logical that an Ottoman Committee should be formed in England. There are men and women who have travelled in the Turkish Empire and learned to love Turks and Arabs; there are those whose point of view is that of fair-play alone. They remember that once, not so very long ago, British and Turkish troops fought side by side, and the soldiers of both armies learned to respect each other.

The OTTOMAN COMMITTEE takes advantage of the publication of *Turquie Agonisante*, as of a powerful magnet with which to attract towards its fold all the friends of Turkey, all those who believe in the eternal principles of justice,

and even those whose view is solely that the Ottomans should retain their independence in order to prevent complications and difficulties which would be detrimental to the British Empire.

It has been considered advantageous that only Englishmen and European British subjects residing in the United Kingdom should serve on the Committee, since the main purpose of the founders was that of the education of the British public in Ottoman matters. In order to publish literature, to send out lecturers and to organize public meetings, the Committee wish to bring together all friends of the Turks and the Arabs. Alone they stand a poor chance of being heard. Few of us can speak with the authority of a Pierre Loti. United and aiming at the realization of the one common purpose we shall stand a better chance of undoing some of the harm done to the fair name of England by misinformed opponents of Moslem rule in Europe or elsewhere in the world.

This volume was originally written for Frenchmen. It has, with the help of French public and private investigation, gloriously accomplished the task its author intended, and to France mostly do the Turks owe it, beside their own energy and courage, that Adrianople was left to them by Europe. But it should be recorded that in this country many independent English witnesses have throughout the war attempted in vain to gain publicity for their own testimony, which was quite as damaging to the Allies.

The true facts can be denied no longer, but the hopelessness of any attempt to draw up the full record of all the atrocities committed by the Allies is evident. It is small consolation to the friends of the Turks to know that the Bulgarian comitadjis were worse than the others, but that

of the regular troops the Greeks and Servians showed more savagery. There were outrages, such as English officials and newspaper correspondents who witnessed them dare not even try to bring again before their own eyes, which were so awful that we shall never know of them. But bestial, infernal refinements of cruelty, rape, mutilation, child-murder,—these have now been made public. We shall never know the whole truth. We know too much of it already not to question seriously the claim of the Balkan peoples to have acted either as Christians or as civilized human beings.

There is another effect of recent British policy, which it is the aim of the Ottoman Committee to minimise. It is now widely known that a growing dissatisfaction is animating the Moslems of India. British public opinion should most strongly dissociate itself from all antagonism to the Moslems of the Ottoman Empire. The Committee repudiates the conspiracy of silence regarding the ghastly atrocities committed by Orthodox Christians on Moslems. We earnestly hope that our labour be not in vain, and that it may avert a lamentable upheaval in our Indian Empire. A false impression is spreading among our Moslem subjects which our silence in the face of the terrible injustice done to the Turks could not fail to foster, a situation fraught with the gravest danger. By protesting in thousands we may hope to prevent it. We are confident that our appeal to British honour will be heeded, and that the Moslems of India will be convinced that British love of justice is something more than a name.

September, 1913.

BEDWIN SANDS.

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR.

I hope that those who have the kindness to read these ill-arranged letters will be indulgent to them. They were feverishly written in indignation and sorrow and published in haste, in order to unmask, if possible, so much disgraceful hypocrisy, to try to force a little truth into the public ear and to crave a little justice.

But they should be continued, for every day brings me new, positive details to the support of my cause. In spite of censorship and fine words, the true facts will be universally known in the end. Arson, massacres, pillage, rape, monstrous and unutterable mutilations of prisoners, nothing is lacking to the account of the most Christian armies. I grant, if you will, that all this is inevitable when primitive nations are let loose in war; and I should not have mentioned them had not the *liberators* really harped too much on this chord in order to stir up the ignorant and the credulous against the poor Turks who have done far less than they.

P. LOTI.

TURKEY IN AGONY.

AFTER THE FIRE.

October 11, 1911.

Yesterday there survived a town which, as if by a miracle, had almost preserved its identity since the days of Eastern glory. The noise of engine-whistles and the clanking of vehicles, which are such features of our modern capitals, were still kept at bay. Life was flowing there, thoughtful and discreet, tempered by faith ; men still prayed there, and thousands of uniform little tombs of exquisite shape peopled the shady places, gently reminiscent of a death without terror. That was Stambul. Nor was it at the end of the world. It was in Europe, scarcely three days from our feverish and nerve-racking Paris.

Poor Stambul ! Its dilapidation, we must admit, was becoming extreme. All the snobbish tourists,—who are probably the human class

which is least capable of understanding anything about anything,—expressed their indignation as they landed from the steamers or *trains de luxe* at the sight of those crooked houses, of shattered buildings everywhere, of the rubbish which lay scattered in the lifeless streets. Artists and thoughtful dreamers, however, felt themselves captivated from the first by that ancient Eastern charm, which I have so often sought to express, but which always escaped through my clumsy words.

Poor, great and stately Stambul! It was withering like, in fact, the whole of Islam under the breath of the West, reeking of coal smoke. We must admit that the Turks, the younger ones brought up on our boulevards, evinced a childish contempt for it. Like moths attracted by the glare of a light, these Moslems of the younger generation, dazzled by all the sham of our subversive ideas and of our cheap luxury, preferred to build for themselves, on the opposite shore of the Golden Horn, houses aping our own. More and more then, the neighbourhood of the great holy mosques was being deserted by the wealthy and Westernised families. Only the humble and worthy Moslems remained, those who still pursued the same train of thought as

their ancestors, and still wound the turban round their sedate brows.

And then so many fires broke out every year in those old wooden districts, ever ready to burn ! There were, nevertheless many quarters, Pera, Galata, Chichli, Nishantash,—to which, Heaven knows, I wish no harm,—but which might have burnt without throwing the artistic world into mourning : quite the reverse. But no, it was always the very heart of Stambul that the fire chose to attack, delighting in the destruction of every vestige of a marvellous past—and preparing these empty spaces where unconscious evil-doers propose to trace to-day perfectly straight avenues in the American style and to erect rows of houses all alike.

To crown everything, during the last two years, the Turkish municipality seemed to have attacked relentlessly everything Eastern. They have lost there, as we have, the sense of beauty and the respect for things which their ancestors venerated ; mosques and tombs are no longer sacred. Did they not think lately of destroying, in order to make room for hideous blocks of flats, that historic cemetery of Rumeli-Hissar, which is perhaps the most precious jewel on the European shore. • As for the great Byzantine Walls, which

extend from Eyub to the Seven Towers, through grounds otherwise useless and destitute of life, the great walls so imposing and loftily austere which attract every year hundreds of visitors, I believe that they only stand now for want of money to pull them down. And I learn that paltry little town officials, under the pretext of enlarging a street already large enough, have dared to destroy the exquisite colonnade and the arches of the Shah-Zahde, thus blotting out one of the most dignified and delightfully Turkish districts. How can they tolerate over there such stupid crimes? There are certainly men of high intellect in the "committees" of Turkey, men with an artistic sense, and Moslems of breeding, able to understand that, even for the mere sake of national dignity, it should be necessary to preserve these witnesses of such a noble past. Alas, these rulers of to-day are outrun, it must be admitted, by the *Rayas*, who are permeating their ranks more and more: Armenians, Jews, Greeks, who not only fail to understand but who hate every feature of the majesty of old Islam. There remains nevertheless a practical point of view which it seems these people should realize: the strangers, who come in crowds every year to visit Stambul, which used to be such a marvellous

museum in itself, and who bring pockets full of gold, shall we still see them when the ediles, like those who have just razed the holy colonnades to the ground, shall have succeeded in accommodating the town of the Khalifs to the style of a Chicago or even of a Berlin?

Nevertheless, and in spite of all, Stambul still existed at the beginning of the current year 1911. It had preserved most of its adorable retreats, where you could find the silence of the old peaceful times, near the mosques, under the secular trees. It had especially preserved its unique outline which was gorgeously lit up by sunrise or moonlight. Now alas, last summer, during the long dry days which made water so scarce, the whole slope of the Golden Horn caught fire like straw. Nothing could stop the raging flames and the flying sparks. With terrible swiftness the fire had soon annihilated immense districts which were altogether Turkish, consuming in one flaming furnace the mosques, the houses with their jealous lattices, the venerable trees, the kiosks around the holy tombs, everything in short that imbued it with seduction and mystery.

Even the silhouette of this town of minarets and domes, the great profile that we used to discern from afar outlined against the sky, has

been tampered with and made almost unrecognisable.

In face of the irreparable destruction there is nothing to do but bow one's head. There has occurred, however, at the same time, something not less touching and still more intimately human, in the presence of which it is our duty not to remain inactive. In the space of a few hours, over sixty thousand victims found themselves on the streets, having lost their homes, their clothes, their furniture, even, their tools. These poor people, utterly destitute, must be helped at all cost.

You will object that the tale I tell is old. It is now two months since the burning of Stambul and pity has already been diverted elsewhere. Alas! And yet, it is on the contrary of poignant and immediate interest, this sad story which I wish to repeat here. Its actuality has been revived by the first Autumnal rains. It will be rendered still more pitiful by the first frosts, the early snows. During the fine, warm summer nights the victims of the fire camped anywhere, dressed anyhow; but now comes Winter, the terrible Winter of the Bosphorus. People at home usually fancy that Constantinople, because it is an Eastern town, must be always sunny.

One must have lived there to know that icy dampness which clutches the town with the advent of Autumn, the deadly winds which blow down from the Black Sea, and which make the town the home of bronchitis and consumption.

I remember the wave of sympathy stirred up in France by the Messina disaster, when so many human beings were buried under the mass of fallen buildings. It is true that in Stambul there were very few casualties, but there is a feature which is perhaps even worse: to-day when the first relief has been used up, there remain quite thirty thousand wretches homeless and almost naked. What will these people do when all the domes of their mosques are covered with a white shroud of snow and when the streets where they are sleeping are filled with slush? Now, more than ever, should we show our sympathy. And all these homeless people, unprotected against the cold rain, children shivering and coughing, women old and bent, crippled old men, all these humble people are so good-tempered, so honest and dignified. Labourers, little tradesmen of pure Moslem descent, had lived from day to day, happy in their little wooden houses without the feverish longing, the envious hatred which grows in the hearts of the people of our great Western

towns. They were not the modernised Turks ; but, like the Turks of old, they went to the Mosque when the muezzin called. They were wont to gather in picturesque animated groups in the quiet places, smoking their narghilehs under the shade of the plane-trees. Travellers very often stopped to observe their incomprehensible serenity, astounded at their trust in the efficacy of prayer. Many a traveller owes them to-day an alms for delightful reveries enjoyed in watching them. All the aimless wanderers that the steamers bring every year to the Bosphorus owe their mite to Stambul, were it only because they have feasted their eyes on its incomparable aspect, to-day almost destroyed. As for my unknown friends, to whom I tried in my books to reveal the true Turkey, who, while reading them, may have for one minute forgotten our vain agitations, it is to them that I turn imploring them to hear my cry for pity.

Let me add that this work of relief for which I appeal is an essentially French enterprise, for it is the French of Constantinople who have devoted themselves to it during the last two months with an admirable zeal, and it was the wife of the French Ambassador who took the lead.

May I be permitted to borrow the following sentences from the appeal circulated by her :—

“I am sure,” she says, “that an appeal to French charity will find its echo in our dear country. It is because I know the generosity of my countrymen that I am happy and proud in fulfilling this duty that devolves on me.”

We must not disappoint her or turn a deaf ear to her appeal. Humble brothers are waiting there ; they have not where to rest their heads ; they are starving, and already they feel the cold intensely.

P.S.—This paper, charitable as always, willingly undertakes to receive the money. But it is not only money we appeal for, but also blankets, coats—anything you like. Let the wealthy men and fashionable women part with their old-fashioned and soiled garments to those who have nothing left, now that all their poor clothes have been burned with their houses. Parcels of clothing or linen can be sent to Mme. Bompard, the wife of the French Ambassador, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where an office has been opened to receive them.

P.P.S.—(*One month later.*) Do you know how many people have answered my appeal ? Three French women, one English woman ; in all, four !

LETTER FROM AN ITALIAN.

At the time when Italy is pouncing on Tripoli I receive the following letter from an Italian :—

December 6, 1911.

SIR,—In begging you to give your views on the Italian expedition to Tripoli, I am sure I express also the wishes of His Excellency Prince Pietro Sanza di Scalea, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Italy, and Editor of the *Italia Illustrata* of Rome.

My countrymen will be very happy to know with what interest our glorious enterprise is followed on the other side of the Alps.

Please to accept, etc., etc.,

TITO MAZZONI.

And here is my answer :—

SIR,—You are good enough to ask my views on the “*glorious*” enterprise of Italy.

But glory and right I see only on the side of the admirable defenders of their hereditary soil,—Turks and Arabs,—who were surprised

by the suddenness of the attack, and who, having pitifully inferior armaments, have stood up, nevertheless, to shrapnel and massacre like the heroes of an epic.

Glory, moreover,—true, pure glory,—can never be on the side of the conquerors and the aggressors. I am sure beforehand that if you pursue your enquiry, you will find in every European country an overwhelming majority to answer you as I do.

I have, etc.,

PIERRE LOTI.

THE ITALO-TURKISH WAR.

December 15, 1911.

I remember one night in the African bush that a magnesium flare enabled me to follow for a few seconds the struggles of a buffalo with a panther which had just sprung on it. It was an admirable sight to see the poor buffalo rear desperately in his efforts to shake off the beast clinging to his neck ; but the fight was unequal, firstly because of the unexpectedness of the attack and also because the buffalo had no claws to defend himself against the hungry panther, which, on the contrary, had just planted in the buffalo's living flesh ten long, sharp claws which drew his blood in streams.

Between this episode of the jungle and the Italo-Turkish War I find a close parallel ; the same suddenness,—and the same motive, alas!—on the part of the aggressor ; the same inequality of weapons, the same heroic fury on the defender's part.

But to-day the fighters are men! And

Europe, • just when massacres are perpetrated, looks on in the utmost serenity! How laughable are all these grand empty words: progress, pacifism, conferences and arbitration!

Already I hear the Italians answering me that we have played the part of conquerors ourselves, in Algeria first, many years ago it is true, but later in Tonkin and elsewhere. Alas! yes, we must bow our heads. It was, however, infinitely less bloody than their work in Tripoli. There remain, nevertheless, criminal stains on our history. That is why it is not against the Italians alone that I raise a sad protest. It is against us all, the so-called Christian nations of Europe; most of the killing in the world is done by us; with high-sounding words about fraternity on our lips we invent every year new and more infernal explosives. We carry fire and blood, for sheer love of plunder, into the African and Asiatic worlds; and we treat like cattle men of black or yellow race. Everywhere we shatter with shells civilizations that differ from our own. We despise them *a priori*, without understanding anything about them, because they are less practical, less utilitarian than ourselves and inferior in armaments. And in our train, when we have done with killing, we always introduce

unrestrained exploitation; our great factories with their prison-like methods, destructive of small individual trading, together with the restlessness, the ugliness, the cheap goods, the *apéritifs*, the covetousness and the feeling of hopelessness. After watching our work at close quarters, far from the metropolis where we exchange our bland fraternal speeches, one must admit that, since the time of the Huns, the human species has not taken ten steps towards Pity. I will say, however, and with the certainty of being backed up by the testimony of the Chinese themselves, that, at the time of the last expedition to China, the Latins,—Italians or French,—were those who, after the fight, showed themselves incomparably the most compassionate and tender-hearted.

French newspapers, for the most part, are tacitly favourable to Italy. They record calmly victories in which, thanks to powerful artillery, the Italians only lost three or four men, while the Turks were left on the field in hundreds. They tell, unmoved, of the public hanging of rows of Arab prisoners, unjustly dubbed rebels. They tell of pillage, of incendiarism, of slaughter: they call it "clearing the ground": one would think that they were describing the hunting of

big game. The correspondent of a well-known Parisian journal recently went into ecstasies over the *beauty* (*sic*) of long-distance artillery firing, of such precision that the Arabs, who faced it with their wretched rifles, were mown down like grass in a field; he spoke even of a *damned* (*sic*) mosque which delayed the advance of the conquerors because the Turks had entrenched themselves there and fought like lions at bay. . . . Another correspondent related that, throughout the ruined villages of the oasis, their walls rent by shells, there were found among the corpses, among the cattle and the maddened sheep-dogs, only a few fanatics remaining who still attempted to fire at the invaders. (Fanatics, the word is a find, anyone would be a fanatic for less!) But they were *captured* and carried away without difficulty. (To the gallows no doubt.) Such reports show unconscious stupidity. Of course, the newspaper correspondents live in the Italian camp and allow themselves to be influenced by the agreeable treatment they receive. In the same way these officers, whose guests they are, remain day after day under the intoxicating influence of gunpowder. At the bottom of their hearts, however, during the hours of silence, no doubt they recognise with a certain pang that the

enterprise is unworthy and that the means used are cruel.

But, if the French newspapers are biassed in favour of the invaders, then they have never less than now reflected the feelings of the nation. I am sure of this, for I have questioned people in all walks of life, even peasants in the depths of the country. Condemnation and painful surprise are evinced on almost every side in this country. I mean to insist on this, were it only for the benefit of the seven or eight million Arab subjects we have in Africa, whom the attitude of the Press in this matter has filled with consternation and revolt.

By the way, I may add that we treat these subjects in a shameful manner, worrying them with useless annoyances. In Algeria, in Tunis we have hundreds of mean little officials who treat every Moslem with stupid contempt and cause us to be secretly hated, thus setting on foot the general exodus towards Syria, Morocco or any other Islamic country.

In the eyes of so-called Christian Europe, Moslems of every country are considered legitimate game, and the hunt is usually successful, thanks to the superiority of European killing-machines, which soon convert their land into great red charnel-houses.

•

The hunting is nearly finished in Africa, from Zanzibar to the Moghreb, passing through enslaved Egypt. Enslaved also are the Moslems of India. And towards Persia two terrible hunters make their way, one from the South, the other from the North.

Turkey remains as a hunting-field, but she at least is not disposed to submit. In spite of the disease of modernism, which is already attacking her sons, she remains a redoubtable fighter. With her proud and heroic armies she will defend herself to her last drop of blood.

* * * * *

They naturally make much in Italy of Bedouin *atrocities*. Very well. I know the people of the desert; I do not pretend that they are tender-hearted men, and I pity with all my heart the poor little soldiers who fell into their frenzied clutches. But how well I understand the ferocity of their hatred, their exasperated thirst for vengeance! . . . Oh! these strangers who, without provocation, landed like demons one dreadful day on their sands and began to pillage, to burn and to kill! For, after all, if the Italians have their grievances against the Turks, (like the wolf in the fable), what have the Arabs done to them?

Of Italian atrocities, alas, there are many also, and infinitely less excusable. The newspapers in every country have recorded them; the Kodaks, whose testimony can hardly be contested, have brought us their dreadful records. During those sinister days of October, contrary to the rights of men and the absolute rules of the Hague Convention, did they not dare to give the order to shoot down *en masse* the Arabs who were merely suspected of having taken up arms? After that they killed to their hearts' content, and the corpses of many hundreds of harmless peasants were strewn about the oasis, which became a charnel-house of human bodies. And what about the savage scenes that followed the execution of Cawass Marco? What of the hanging of prisoners? And in the Red Sea, what of those poor Arab sailing-boats, which surely were not warships, and yet were set on fire by the Italian squadron, under the pretext that they might *perhaps* be utilized to carry soldiers?

What I say here I am sure is felt also in many Italian hearts, at least in the hearts of all those who at the beginning of the war demonstrated in favour of peace, and in the hearts of others also. In the same way when the English troops, using bullets of too ingenious a pattern, killed thousands

of Dervishes who defended themselves with honest old guns; or when Mr. Chamberlain phlegmatically sought to suppress the Boers, there was no lack of English people, thank God, to express their indignation and sorrow—and King Edward the Seventh must have been of their number, if we are to judge by the easy conditions imposed on the Transvaal at the end of the war.

* * * * *

Poor spruce and beautiful Italy! Does she really fancy that she is marching to glory? I am pretty sure that she has lost now her first illusions. Besides, she has met with universal condemnation and she knows it.

Individual glory for her combatants. Oh! yes, no doubt she has secured that. Her soldiers are Latins and our brothers. There must have been many among them who fought heroically and died nobly. But all this cannot expiate the initial crime of embarking on the war. Poor nation, friend of our own. I will take it that she set out light-heartedly, as, in the Middle Ages, knights used to go forth with plumes flying joyfully to fight; she did not foresee such horrible shedding of blood. To-day, deeply involved, she would deem herself

dishonoured if she drew back. On the contrary, how her reputation would be restored, how fresh and noble it would be to say: "Enough, enough killing; we do not want to steep our hands in blood any longer. We moderate our demands to bring this nightmare to an end."

* * * * *

Let us return to my episode in the African bush. In the same place a second flash of magnesium followed a few minutes later. In the interval, nocturnal animals were to be heard yelping, beasts of prey which, when they smell blood, draw near stealthily to tear to pieces the remains. As I said, there followed a second flash of magnesium. The drama was drawing to a close. Disembowelled, the buffalo lay on the grass, the panther was tearing out its entrails, and in the jungle around could be discerned the muzzles of howling animals awaiting their share—the hyenas!

Certain European States agitate craftily against Turkey, now that she is involved in a terrible war. They are getting ready to demand *compensations*. They remind me of those hyenas gathering round the dying buffalo. "Compensations," what for, my God? What has Turkey done to these? Truly I prefer

to them the hyenas of the jungle, which at least made no use of formulæ. They certainly asked for no *compensations*, but their howling meant quite openly: "Here is spoil being divided, here is eating going on, there is a smell of flesh, and no longer any danger. Therefore let us go in and fill our bellies."

I can quite foresee the insults which this manifesto will draw down upon me from certain ranters, either selfish or deluded, to whom civilization means railways, exploitation, and slaughter. They will not reach me in the ever-deepening retreat in which I am passing my last days. I am nearing the term of my earthly sojourn. I have nothing left to desire or fear, but, as long as I am able to make my voice heard, even by a few, I shall regard it as my duty to proclaim everything which appears clearly to me to be true.

Down with wars of conquests, whatever may be the pretext under which they are cloaked! Shame on human butcheries!

*A PROPOS OF ANOTHER ITALIAN
LETTER.*

January 10, 1912.

A second letter from Italy has, however, penetrated the retreat in which I have isolated myself. A pitiful letter, framed in a deep black border.

MONSIEUR PIERRE LOTI,

If the conquest of Italy had been made by France, would you have written the article which I have just read in the *Figaro* of January 3, 1912?

Salutations . . .

THE MOTHER OF A SOLDIER
WHO DIED IN TRIPOLI ON
OCTOBER 23, 1911.

P.S.—You will not answer this, of course. Perhaps you will have read it all the same.

I do want to answer it on the contrary, and, since that letter was anonymous, I must trespass on the kindness of the *Figaro*. With the deepest

respect, I want to tell this mother of a soldier who died on the field of glory that, if the Tripoli expedition had been a French undertaking, I would have protested in the same terms. I will even add this, if a son of mine had been killed in such a war of *conquest*,—I have one now with the colours,—my protest would have been, without doubt, more indignant. Before the resignation of this mourning mother, then, I can only bow my head without being able to understand.

If I have spoken of an isolated retreat it was because, since the publication of the preceding article, I have had to give orders that every letter bearing an Italian postmark should be thrown *a priori* into the waste paper basket.

May I be permitted at this point to draw a parallel between nations? I have in the past attacked the Americans *à propos* of the Cuban war; never did a discourteous letter come to me from America. When I was in New York quite lately, the Press went no farther than to recall the matter, in perfectly courteous terms, and the reception accorded me was not one whit less cordial on that account. I had strongly attacked the English about the Transvaal and about Egypt; not one discourteous letter came to me from England, not

one hurtful article was written in the Press, and when I went to London I received there, in spite of it all, a charming and never-to-be-forgotten reception.

On the other hand, as soon as I had denounced in terms that were certainly courteous, the unjustifiable action of Italy, I began at once to receive every day the filthiest insults and threats of all kinds. And so I do not even open the letters now. Not only did they insult me, but especially they heaped odious insults on France "*cowed and submissive before Germany.*" All these letters, I will admit, obviously emanated from very low quarters. Their great number seems to me, however, to indicate the state of mind of unhappy, misled Italy, whom, in spite of her ingratitude, we still call the *sister-nation*. It is only from this general point of view that the facts seem to me worth recording.

MASSACRES BY THE TURKS.

November, 1912.

Massacres by the Turks! In heavily-leaded type this accusation against the vanquished is repeated in the newspapers, over the stories of their terrible and sanguinary defeats. Of Bulgarian atrocities there has been no lack; nor are the facts denied, but their reports are only printed in small type at the bottom of a column.

Massacres by the Turks! Quite so. Poor distracted Turks, betrayed and abandoned by the whole of Europe! This catchword is used as a heading to tirades in praise of the liberating mission of the Allies, the era of peace, liberty and brotherly love which is to follow their victory!

During the dark days of October, 1912, in the oasis of Tripoli, might we not have exclaimed in the same way: "Massacres by the Italians?" And they were unprovoked invaders, they had not the excuse which the Turks can claim, hard

pressed on all sides as they are. During the last expedition to China how many towns have I not seen, like Tong-Tcheou or Tien-tsin, utterly innocent of the deeds of the Boxers, reduced to a heap of ruins, where corpses of old men, women and children had been thrust into heaps with the butt-ends of rifles, among broken lacquer-ware and china. There was ample justification for saying: "Europe, Europe who pretends to carry into the Far East her famous torch of civilization, Europe is guilty of massacres!" And pray tell me, what excuse could she invoke? The Huns could not have done worse than us. Have not the English killed thousands of Dervishes at Khartoum and peasants at Denchawai? Have they not on their conscience the camps of concentration of the Transvaal? And we French, have we not during the conquest of Algeria, (to mention only that one), murdered and suffocated by *smoke* women and children? One has but to read the history of our own times to be convinced that the killing is as blind and furious as in the Middle Ages, every time a fight occurs between men of different races and religions.

Poor Turks, if it be true that, here and there, they committed massacres during the atrocious

war waged against them on all sides, there are many extenuating circumstances!

I know many who, in their place and reduced to such extremities, would have been possessed by a rage for massacre. The Turks are more primitive than we are, more violent, although usually kind and tender-hearted, and better men than we are; but they become terrible and seething when exasperated too much. Especially primitive are the peasants coming from the depths of Anatolia, from the edge of the desert, who are hastily armed against the invaders, and who handle with rough hands our deadly and hellish weapons. Their common hatred for all nations calling themselves Christian is easy to explain. How could they avoid thinking that, whether openly or stealthily, these nations are at bottom unanimous in the desire to suppress them? We French have robbed them of Algeria, Tunis and Morocco. The English have taken Egypt. Persia is half under the yoke. Italy has just carried fire and blood into Tripoli, giving others the signal to set to mercilessly. Each in our own way we lay a heavy hand on these conquered countries; the meanest of our little officials treats every Moslem like a slave. We gradually deprive these believers of prayer;

on these dreamers, lovers of quiet, we impose our vain restlessness, our mania for speed, our alcoholism, our trumpery wares of all kinds. Everywhere we bring unrest, cupidity and dark despair.

Poor Turks! Denied to-day so callously by all those in Europe who pretended to support them, they are abandoned by an insulting press, by the diplomats who were pledged to defend them, by the Powers who had shown in the past friendship for them. And they are even accused of cowardice in battle. That is really too much, for thousands of dead Servians and Bulgarians, who fell on the battle field of Thrace, bear witness that the Turks still know how to fight. It is certain, of course, that we do not recognise the heroes of the past, those of Plevna, those of the recent war which nearly put an end to Greece, and even those who yesterday in Tripoli held their own, outnumbered by a hundred to one. Let us grant first of all that they were not ready, that they were badly led, and that, through the negligence of their chiefs, they were *starving*. And then let us remark that this degeneration of their army is our own work. Do we not always bring Western confusion? Our modern, pernicious, often childish Utopias, with which we are

obsessed, have contaminated the Turks with surprising rapidity, as always happens with a new virus, which spreads quicker in unaccustomed blood. Many of their soldiers have lost their faith, and most of their officers have neglected the profession of arms, and have dabbled childishly in petty politics. Our spirituous liquors have also done their share, and certain military chiefs, those who were responsible for the worst defeats of the war, were drunkards.

A Parliamentary Turkey, bereft of her faith and her courage, nothing could have caused the friends of the East more sorrow and pained surprise. . . . They also committed, after the granting of the Constitution, the capital fault of introducing Christians into the ranks of their army. Heaven forbid that I should belittle here the name of Christian, but those of the Turkish army were Bulgars and Greeks, naturally ill-disposed to fight against their kin; they took also Armenians, forgetting the old Turkish proverb, "*Allah created of the same spirit* (that is to say, creatures of fear and cowardice) *the hare and the Armenian.*" In the past only Moslems were admitted to the honour of fighting. If only true Turks had faced the enemy, perhaps they would have been destroyed all the same ;

so well and scientifically had the Allies prepared their attack ; but at least they would have died gloriously.

There is nothing more revolting than the extent to which the Turks are misunderstood. It would not be too much to say that the Occidentals who have never set foot in their country do not even begin to understand their real nature. It is the same in America, whence I have just returned ; they habitually say over there, when speaking of the Turks : "the barbarians of Asia." *The barbarians . . .* Yet I do not believe that there exists in the world a race of men more deeply good-natured, courageous, loyal and kind-hearted. I must make an exception, unfortunately, and exclude those who have been brought up in our schools, or have rotted on our boulevards, and who become later officials, all those I give up. But the people, the real people, the little *bourgeois*, the peasants, who are better than they ? You can ask those of us who have lived in the East, even our nuns and our priests who are so respected over there, ask them whom they prefer and whom they esteem most : the Turks, or the Bulgars, the Servians and the other Levantine Christians. I know beforehand what their

answer will be. And every one of them will affirm that these Bulgars, whose courage is admirable, I should be the last to deny it, that these Bulgars who advance singing a *Te Deum* amid the ringing of Church bells, are a race infinitely more brutal and murderous than the Moslems.

Ah! those ancient towns lost in the depth of Anatolia, those villages set in green, standing round white minarets and black cypress, what peace and security emanates from them, how honest and patriarchal seems their life! Oh! those men, peasants or humble artisans who go and kneel in the mosque five times a day and who sit in the evening in the shade of their vine near their ancestors' tomb, smoking and dreaming of eternity! Professional murderers these, forsooth! . . . I remember to have seen in Spain bulls driven to the arena the day before a great bull fight. They arrived peaceful; some of them were certainly not malicious; it was only later when they had been tormented with spears, and tortured by the cruel banderillas that they felt like killing everyone, and tried to gore people in a frenzy of rage.

Nowhere as much as among the Turks—the true Turks—can you find the care for the poor,

the weak, the aged and the little ones, the respect for the parents and the tender veneration for *the mother*. When a man, even of mature age, is sitting in one of those harmless little cafés—where spirits have ever been unknown—if his father enters, he rises, lowers his voice, lets his cigarette go out (not to smoke in his father's presence), and goes to sit humbly behind him.

As for their compassion to animals they could all teach us a lesson. With what good nature they have tolerated and fed for centuries the stray dogs of Stambul, with what care they used to go out into the street and cover up the litters of puppies with a carpet when it rained. On the day when the municipality, mostly composed of Armenians, decided that they should be destroyed in the atrocious way which we know, there were battles in every quarter, almost a revolt, in their defence. As for the cats, they seldom make way for passers-by, for they are sure that the passers-by will make way for them. Finally, at Brusa, in one of the adorable corners of that town, a relic of the old days of Islam, there exists a hospital for storks, for those who were wounded or too old to fly away at the approach of winter. There you see them with bandages, or even a wooden leg. When I paid

a visit to it they were nursing there an old owl in its second childhood, which, like the storks, was living on the alms of the pious. . . . In truth, at such a time of anguish as the present I am relating here things which are ridiculously childish; but they are typical, they have some slight importance, testifying how these people, whom so many ignorant fanatics accuse of barbarism, are, on the contrary, full of compassion and kind-heartedness. . . .

Will Europe ever understand that Stambul, labouring to-day under a terrible threat, is a sacred home of history, art and poetry, that it should be defended at all cost, and that on the day when the Crescent shall cease to stand out against the sky, on the same day its magical charm will suddenly vanish? I am afraid not; Europe will not understand; and I am preaching in the desert.

Without hope either that my humble appeal will be heard, I feel called upon to cry to Europe: "Mercy for the Turks, spare those that are left! They afford the last refuge of tranquillity, respect, sobriety, silence and prayer!"

I believe that there is not a Frenchman of good sense and feeling who has lived among them, who does not associate himself ardently

with the homage that I wish to pay them here during this time of supreme distress; useless homage, I know it well, which will be, alas, like those mournful wreaths which one lays on tombs.

A LETTER ON MODERN WARFARE.

November, 1912.

So progress, civilization and Christianity signify more rapid killing, automatic killing, and shrapnel, that is what represents for the time being their supreme expression!

Shrapnel! To-day, when we are busy destroying the last wild beasts and exterminating ravaging microbes, will there be no jails opened, will there be no pillory erected for the inventors of these hellish devices? In less than a fortnight a whole country is deluged in blood, and sixty thousand men of the bravest and best are lying on the field, their bodies riddled.

If the time had really come when the Balkans were to be handed back to the Balkan nations, Europe,—improvident at first and to-day an accomplice—could surely have found less atrocious means. Even if the hour had come when the Basilica of Saint Sophia was to return to Christ, was it necessary to this end that so many human breasts should be riddled with

bullets. Have there not been for centuries in Constantinople, even in Stambul, Greek and Bulgarian churches where the worship was never disturbed?

Yet Christians are still heaping every insult upon the Turks, in spite of their distress, like hounds baying round a wounded deer. Before speaking let those who insult the Turks go and live a little while among them ; until then anything they may say will prove nothing more than does the savage barking of the dogs!

The conquered territories, valiantly conquered to be sure, should, it would seem, suffice for the Allies. But no, the enemy must be driven to the last extremity and lose also his Holy City. In order to satisfy savage and arrogant ambition all those who remain must be killed, all those who in the last throes of despair rush madly and almost unarmed to defend the walls of Stambul.

And so now this unhappy Turkish people, —who had, I grant, their hours of violent exasperation, who committed grave faults in their delirium,—but who have been spared nothing during the last year, neither wars of spoliation, nor deception, nor fires that destroyed thousands of houses, nor earthquakes, nor hunger, nor typhus, now this overwhelmed people wish at

least to die crowned with glory. Here is the Sultan declaring that he will be killed in his palace, and Kiamil Pasha, an old man of eighty-five years, working at his desk. Children, very young children, leave their schools to enlist and be shot down at Chataldja. Priests rush to the trenches and every white-bearded old man who can still hold a rifle.

Here is a detail which would be funny were it not sublime. Some wretched eunuchs from the harems, from whom nothing was expected, go forth, even they, with rifles on their shoulders. To all these ultimate death is a certainty, with the devilish shrapnel of the Bulgarians; they know that, but they go to meet it all the same.

Some naïve Arabs offer to come to the rescue of the Crescent with 500,000 horsemen. . . . Oh! no. Stay where you are, poor desert-dwellers. Your march toward death would be useless, since you have not in your hands the explosives of really civilised men!

And before this outburst of heroic despair not one of the Christian nations will raise its voice to say, "Enough! Have mercy!" . . . No; in the face of the treaties signed, of their word passed, they all think of nothing else but to throw themselves on the spoil. There are

nations, like France, who do not care to soil their hands in the dismemberment ; but to appeal for mercy with a voice loud enough to make itself heard, there is not one. Shame ! shame on Europe ; shame on her sham Christianity ! And, for the first time in my life, I believe, I am going to say, "*Shame on modern warfare !*"

THE TURKS AGAIN.

December, 1912.

I have so badly, so clumsily defended my Turkish friends in a recent letter, that I want to add this as a *post-scriptum*. I had written of fugitives because I had been told of them. Thank God they were isolated fugitives. Later details from the front accord the Turks their due crown of glory; they fought like lions, in spite of the pangs of hunger, in spite of the presumptuous inefficiency of a Government which deprived them of all necessities. Alas! as events tread on each other's heels, and as we approach the supreme climax, the European nations—Prussia especially (their erstwhile friend)—display an easy faculty for breaking their pledged word and for double-dealing, which is every day more astounding. It might, perhaps, be wise to remember that the Sultan is not only the Emperor of the Turks, but that he is also the Khalif, venerated by millions and millions of believers in the depths of Asia, and even of

Africa. As such, he should receive some consideration, especially on the part of England, who is, because of India, the greatest Moslem Power. It might be good policy not to allow him to be hounded out of the holy town and the sacred mosques.

Poor Turks! Abandoned and betrayed by all, cheated in the purchases for their navy and army, they had not yet received the kick of the ass, and now a certain section of the Press deals it out to them. They are insulted, made fun of, after they have left on their blood-stained field 50,000 dead, who fell gloriously in the cause of Islam. I am included in these insults, of course, and I am proud of it. It is always honourable to have engaged in the defence of, and to have demanded mercy for, the vanquished, whom everyone sets upon. I am not like the European Chancelleries—whose power, unfortunately, I have not. Being a friend of long-standing of the Turks I am still more so in their time of anguish; to be otherwise would be despicable. I share, it seems, the honour of being insulted for their sake with Claude Farrère, who was one of my officers when I was in command in the East, and who has remained my friend. It has been written: "Only those two defend them." So I

should think! *Among all the writers whose voice has a chance of being heard, we are the only two who know them!*

The Greek army, led by princes who were warriors devoid of ferocity, fought normally, as far as it is agreed alas! that one should fight in our century of *progress*. But the Bulgars—whose contempt for death is prodigious and commands respect (no one dreams of denying it)—the Bulgars, what atrocious warfare they have waged, after having prepared and matured it for so long! Their success is not due so much to their admirable courage as to their arms, which are more up-to-date and infinitely more deadly.

Their shrapnel—devilish invention, if ever there was one—mowed men down by thousands without the possibility of resistance. It is known, also, that they had conceived the idea of dazzling and distracting during the night with electric searchlights the peasants from Anatolia, who had never seen anything of the kind before. Besides, did they not divert a river in order to flood unhappy Adrianople, which refused to surrender, and did they not cut the aqueduct which carried water to Stambul?

In so-called Christian churches they sang

hymns of thanksgiving for such things. At least do not drag in the name of Christ. What a perversion of His doctrine! And Pera—the notorious Levantine Pera—has not even the modesty to silence its low music-halls and its bands while the houses around it are choke-full of moaning wounded, while the battle fields are strewn with dead, with thousands of unburied heroes who rot under the rain.

LETTERS ON THE BALKAN WAR

I.

December, 1912.

It is not yesterday that the nations of Europe began to act in this cowardly and criminal fashion. They have done so from the very first. Poland, the Transvaal, Alsace-Lorraine, etc., etc., are, alas! pitiful proofs of this fact, but so far we were accustomed to their acting singly, one after the other; the others—who would have done as much if the occasion had presented itself—raised a chorus of indignation, and, at least, our hearts were lightened by their unanimous disapproval.

But this time they showed their most complete agreement in the overthrow of Turkey and an absolute disdain of the treaties signed. During a recent war, when the Greek army was crushed by Edhem Pasha, I remember Greece at bay appealing to Europe for its mediation, and Europe, who, moreover, had promised nothing, acquiesced by telegram; indeed, she gave more than her mediation, since she imposed the conditions of

peace upon Turkey, thus depriving her of the fruits of her victory. But the Chancelleries of Europe have two weights and measures. To-day this same Turkey, crushed on all sides at once, having already suffered spoliation at the hands of the Italians, this same Turkey to whom, three weeks earlier, all the Chancelleries had unanimously and solemnly renewed their promise that their territorial integrity should be respected, applied in her turn for mediation. Europe, busy contemplating the sharing of the spoils, did not even take the trouble to answer at once but waited twelve days; twelve long days during which carnage proceeded wholesale, with the aid of shrapnel and quick-firing guns. Europe might have had the decency to say at once, "No, you are beaten now, therefore you are nothing more than pariahs. We decline to interfere. You must negotiate directly with your enemies." Turkey without any doubt would have done so, as she seems to be doing to-day, and she would have had a few thousand more men to have died on the battle field. Shame on Europe! It is she who bears the hateful responsibility for these hecatombs! It is quite easy to understand how impossible it is for her to-day to deprive the Allies of the prize won on the battle field, but they

should have foreseen, *especially they should not have promised.* They should have foreseen, and, in order to exact the just reforms demanded by the Slav's, our diplomatists should have brought more serious pressure to bear on those young, arrogant and irresponsible members of the Committees, who have brought Turkey to her ruin. The cynicism and the ease with which they abandoned Turkey are absolutely revolting. Poor Turks! robbed, betrayed, shot down wholesale, and on the top of it insulted in so cowardly a fashion by the ignorant public, how well we can understand why anger and rage have gone to their head and why they see red. I say, poor Turks! But I say also, almost as heartily, poor Bulgars! Poor victorious Bulgars, who have lost more than 40,000 men! I have no hatred against these people although I have noticed, *like all those who have lived over there,* that they are more brutal, more fanatical, and usually much more difficult to live with than the Moslems; certainly they lack the straightforwardness and the deep honesty of the latter. What a pity that, to support my contention, I cannot publish widely the list of Moslem victims killed and tortured by Bulgarian *Comitadjis!* But the whole of the Slav Press is on this

subject united in a conspiracy of silence. It is necessary to go to the spot, to Salonica for instance, in order to obtain overwhelming evidence and figures. Of course we read from time to time in some French newspaper : "The Bulgarians have burnt such and such a Turkish village and massacred the inhabitants"; but that is said lightly and quickly skipped over. How much less excusable are they, the victors, than the Turks who are hounded from the soil they have been cultivating for the last five hundred years, hunted like wild beasts! While I write I have before me the photograph of an officer of the Ottoman army, showing him to have been horribly mutilated by his enemies. However, "only Turks could perpetrate massacres," according to the legend which is circulated by the interested parties ; that legend is well established, stubbornly believed, and nothing can be done to uproot it.

I have never heard of atrocities perpetrated by Greeks * ; the royal family they selected is highly respected. Could not they raise a protest when they hear the Turks being accused of ferocity by the Bulgarians and the Servians, among whom

* This was written before the Greeks took Salonica.

violence and murder constitute the foundation of every action? I call to mind the shades of King Alexander and his poor Queen Draga, of Panitza and Stambouloff, to give only well-known names among those of countless dead.

I say: "Poor Bulgars!" What I have just said does not prevent me from admiring as much as anyone else their courage in action; and, of course, I recognise all that is legitimate in their claims upon their ancestors' soil. But there were a thousand different ways of giving them their rights without Europe allowing this atrocious butchery. Because of this I am sorry for them, and I pity them in spite of their victory. I pity them because they were rushed into a war, they were led to the killing by a man who was neither of their race nor of their religion, who has neither the excuse of fanaticism nor that of ancestral traditions, but who knew how to exploit their warlike qualities to further his own personal ambitions. In order to be a great prince and mentioned in history one must apparently have watered the plains with streams of human blood.

II.

November, 1912.

At this time, as I foresaw, coarse insults and threats are pouring on me like hail because I am defending the vanquished ; I am to expect the knife of some Bulgarian. These people are treating me like the Italians did previously. And poor Frenchmen, blinded by the fine word "crusade," are also abusing me. All this, it is true, shows by the style and handwriting that it emanates mostly from prejudiced and ill-educated people. But from higher up in the social scale there come to me in hundreds, noble, touching letters, thanking me much more than I deserve, because I am trying to proclaim the truth, "because my voice relieves their conscience!" Letters from Moslems I could expect, and I grant that they are no proof, in spite of their refined, beautiful phrasing. But I am receiving letters not only from France but from England, Germany, Switzerland ; they, most of them, come from Europeans who have lived in the East, who *know*, who are urging me on and strengthening me in my deep respect for these misunderstood and misrepresented people. There are other letters also, especially typical,

since they come from Ottoman "*Rayas*," bent under the Turkish yoke.

The Greeks could not be suspected of partiality. A little Greek girl writes to me in a laborious and still uncertain handwriting:—

"SIR,—I have just read the touching pages you wrote on November 9th, 1912.

I am a little Greek girl of fourteen from Rumelia, and I feel deep pity for poor distressed Turkey, now forsaken by Europe, who was once her friend. People are always talking about civilization, but what can these poor peasants from the depths of Asia know of it? In the desert there are wild beasts, who will do you no harm as long as you do not worry them in their own haunts; but if you annoy them too much, then they become ferocious. When the Turks do wicked things it is because they are intensely demoralised, seeing that everybody turns against them. They have not had a moment's peace left them for years! Only those who have lived among them still love them.

The Christian world should take the Turks as an example in matters of religion, for the Turk respects it better than we do. To us

Christians it is forbidden to steal and to cheat; we do it nevertheless; a real Turk never does. When, for instance, an old fruit merchant has weighed an *ock* of apples (*elma*) he will always add one more for fear he has made a mistake; what European merchant would do that? On the contrary, the latter lays a finger on the scale-pan in order to make it weigh heavier.

Ferdinand of Bulgaria says in his proclamation that he will conquer the Crescent; that is what one calls civilization. Should not one respect the religion of a race?"

After reading these delightful little sentences, I thought of the proverb of our fathers: "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings . . ." Here is another letter from a Spanish Jewess born and brought up in Turkey. In the early part of our modern history thousands of Spanish Jews, persecuted in the name of Christ—as, by the way, they still are in our own time, by the Christian Slavs—had sought refuge in Turkey, in Salonica and Stambul, where nobody ever interfered with them:—

"What you have just done for our unhappy Turkey reminds me of the man who comes to sit by the deathbed of a forsaken human being

and takes his hand, and keeps it in his own so that the other shall not die alone.

Please write again! May your heart help you to find, not only the words that tell but those that persuade, those that the men who will have to give the verdict will remember in spite of themselves. Proclaim them loudly, all these reasons which prove the necessity for the existence of this poor dear nation, so little known, in truth a humble existence, but their own nevertheless. You, who have lived in my adopted country, testify to the comfort which your soul received there in its longing for faith, kind-heartedness, honesty, wisdom and peace. But, I beg of you, do not yet speak of them with tears. Those who love Turkey have not yet the right to weep over her as over a dead body. • She may not die, speak not of the tomb.

If the dreadful event took place, then only would I cry, because I know that they will become as we are, even us poor Jews, scattered here and there, without a corner that we can call our own. It is said that they are going to lose Asia also. Unhappy people!

If you only knew this feeling of the exiled which is buried in us from our childhood, and

which follows us wherever we pass! I hate to think that the Turks, whom I love, should ever know it. It is years since I left Constantinople and I thought I had forgotten. I did not know that, when one has lived among the Turks, one loves them throughout one's life. I beg of you to write again, to act. Time presses! And I thank you."

What could I add after this spontaneous testimony? What could I add to it that could but weaken it? This letter does honour to the Jewish race. It would be fine if the tribes of Israel came now to relieve with their gold the dreadful misery of this country which gave to their sons, during the centuries when they were hounded on all sides, hospitality, tolerance and peace.

"Since no one heeds your appeal to mercy," writes the unknown lady, "you should find the words that can convince the politicians that it is necessary that this nation should be left alive." Alas, I understand absolutely nothing of the questions of European "balance of power" and of political economy. I can but repeat what everyone says: "The fall of Stambul into the hands of the Bulgars will have a terrible echo in the hearts of millions of Moslems spread far into

Africa and Asia; England and France should then seemingly have a capital interest in the prevention of such an event."

I have people objecting childishly that Mahomet II. had himself taken Constantinople. But this happened in 1453. If, after five centuries of so-called progress, nations, who glory in the name of Christians, do the same thing, and kill in the doing of it *about ten times more men*, this seems to me to show up the bankruptcy of our civilization and sham Christianity.

Would it not be worth while also,—but in this I know that nobody will listen to me,—to preserve the artistic marvels which the Turks have accumulated during five centuries of domination, and which make Constantinople the most remarkable town in the world. Do not tell me that the Bulgarians will reinstate the vanished beauty of Byzantium. No, the ugliness of modernism is about all they would bring with them. When the silhouette of minarets and domes has disappeared from the sky what will there be left? What will there be left when the deep mosques, with their beautiful facings of blue tiles, have lost their mystery, when there will no longer be felt around them the peaceful witchery of

cypress and tomb? Besides, under the mad onslaught of the invading armies, on the day when the Turks coil themselves in the last effort of agony, the day when fire and blood is carried into Stambul, the very dome of Saint Sophia will be threatened with hopeless ruin.

After all, since we must renounce the hope of awakening any feeling of justice or pity, since it is not any longer possible to rectify even with testimonies which are a hundred times more qualified than my own, the legend of the "harmless and kind-hearted" Bulgarians and of the "murderous" Turks, here is a reason which, on the face of it, may seem strange, even futile; but so many thinking people had thought of it already before myself! There are other things in life besides factories, railways, opening up trade, shrapnel and neurasthenia. Besides all these pernicious delusions which delight the crowd of mediocrities and lead to final hopelessness, there is also that calm which we should preserve somewhere; there is meditation; there are dreams. From that point of view Turkey, the old Turkey of the country-side, honest and pious Turkey, as a kind of oasis in the midst of whirlwinds and furnaces, will prove as useful to the world as those great parks of which we feel

every day more and more the need in the midst of our seething cities.

III.

December, 1912.

“Turkish atrocities,” this cliché, which emanates from the Allies (and is propagated through the power of its banknotes by a certain Balkan Committee*), continues to be triumphantly reproduced in the French Press; and each time amiable strangers take the trouble to cut out the paragraph and place it in an envelope addressed to me. They think they have me confounded. Yes, alas, it is practically proved that the defeated Turks, hunted, dying of hunger and despair, have at times committed outrages. They have committed far less, infinitely less than is asserted by their enemies. So many war correspondents, foreigners, well-known for their impartiality, have paid justice to the Turks. They relate even how, starving and passing through Greek villages, the only thing the Turks did was to beg for bread on the door-steps.

* If I am right, it sits in London.

Here is an idea of what these correspondents say.*

"Since there are in Europe armchair philosophers who write that the Turkish soldiers are looters and murderers, it is our duty to protest with energy. We have always found the Turks showing great endurance and restraint; we have never witnessed any act of cruelty." In spite of these assertions it would be unfair to deny that here and there the Turks saw red.

But the Allies! The Allies, less excusable, first because they were the conquerors, then because they were spared the pangs of hunger, but especially because they were advancing in the name of Christ, the Allies, when will the balance sheet of their excesses and of their crimes be prepared? People are beginning to show some feeling at last, in spite of a deliberate intention at first to shut their eyes to the many cruelties committed by the invaders. Here are the Roumanians accusing the Greeks of having massacred the Kutzo-Wallachs. Here is news from Vienna asserting that the troops of General

* M. Jean Rodes of the *Temps*, Mr. Ward Price of the *Daily Mail*, Baron Tycka of the *Local-Anzeiger*, M. Paul Erio of the *Journal*, M. Paul Genève of the *Débats*, Major Zwonger of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, M. Renzo Larco of the *Corriere de Milan*; unfortunately, I have forgotten the names of the others.

Jankovich had destroyed numerous villages in Albania, that thousands of Albanians had been massacred and buried alive. Under the walls of Adrianople Turkish ambulance men who came, under the protection of their flag, to look after Servian wounded, were received with bullets. Quite lately, at Dedeagatch, the fact is absolutely proved that Bulgarian bands pillaged, massacred, and burnt wholesale during three days, continuing the horrible task which the *Comitadjis* had begun so long ago. But the poor Turks lack the money with which to inspire a noble indignation in those newspapers which would sell it to them ; and unfortunately those are the newspapers which influence the rest of the Press. . . .

Apropos of the Bulgarians I will quote this fragment from the letter of a Frenchman who had lived long in Thrace and found himself obliged to fly before the invasion of the "liberators."

"I read every day in the French newspapers continuous dithyrambs in praise of the Balkan armies, especially in praise of this Bulgarian people, who, headed by their uncouth parish priests, threw themselves *en masse* on their hereditary foe.

Race against race! The Cross against the

Crescent! The orthodox Cross, the most fanatical of religious symbols; Cross versus Crescent, according to the Roman Catholic King, Ferdinand of Coburg!

The spectacle is not to be forgotten by anyone who witnessed the arrival of these endless ranks of men, cut as it were out of coarse wood with a hatchet, those heavy soldiers, wearing the Muscovite cap, and the throng behind them of mountaineers clad in sheepskins. Like the hordes of Attila, they said proudly: 'Where we have passed, no grass will grow for five years.'

Yes, one can indeed sing hymns of praise in their honour, they have already written them themselves in every lane and path of Macedonia, on the smouldering ruins of the Moslem villages where they have perpetrated unspeakable horrors, and where the flames still rage and the acrid smoke still darkens the horizon. They have written them on thousands of corpses and on the emaciated faces of the aged men, women and children, at least of the few of those who, rescued from the massacres, dragged themselves to Constantinople, having left on their road to Calvary a long line of dead and dying."

True, the Allies have, during their stay at Salonica, slightly tarnished their halo. Salonica is not an inaccessible place. It is not like so many villages hidden away in the depths of the country. Frenchmen were there who could not help seeing. News of vexations to which one of our naval officers was subjected began to cool down the popular enthusiasm for the *liberators*. Then, on the morrow of their arrival, for a few curses thrown at them as they passed, the Greeks fired on the unarmed crowd, killing five hundred persons (*Turkish mob*, to use the happy expression of a certain reporter). Almost at once the French consulate was inundated with legitimate complaints from our countrymen. We know amongst others the adventure of a French woman, Madame Simon. Because she was "guilty" of having given on her doorstep a piece of bread and a glass of water to some starving Turks she was odiously ill-treated by a Greek officer who dared even to snatch her humble alms from those hungry wretches. Here is also an extract which I have received from a French merchant passing through Salonica:—

"Guided by Levantines of their own stock, indefatigable informers, the Greek soldiers in small bands, Apache like, went first to the

houses of the Jews—there are here nearly 80,000 French-speaking, France-loving Jews—whom they accused of having poisoned them. They forced the men out of the houses, bound them, beat them, sometimes murdered them; then they re-entered to assault the women. Elsewhere, everywhere, they burst the doors open and, bayonets fixed, they demanded what money there was and, from the poorest, even their bread.

Harmless townsmen also were searched in the middle of the street, unhappy Ottoman soldiers were robbed of their last farthing, their watches and even their clothes. A Turkish major was stripped and buffeted; another officer they tried to force to kiss the Greek flag. Prisoners left out in the mud under the rain, without bread, begged for a little water to abate their fever ('Suu! Suu!' 'Water, Water'), and were hurled back with the rifle butts.

The French officers of the *Bruix* were there; they saw Servian and Greek soldiers put out the eyes of Turkish prisoners. . . ."

At this prowess our newspapers are beginning to show at last that they are not devoid of feeling. Yes, it would have been better for the

fair name of the latter-day crusaders that everything had gone on by stealth in the very depth of the provinces; for then the legend of their mansuetude would have been preserved more easily.

* * * * *

All things considered, if the Turks have sometimes been guilty of excesses, the least that can be said of the Allies is that they have committed as many, and it is much more difficult to grant them the benefit of extenuating circumstances. These people, hating one another for centuries, have waged war as it was waged in the Middle Ages, with this difference, that, in this war, they have had at their disposal arms which were infinitely more deadly.

Well, the Middle Ages had their good points. Neither the Red Cross nor the Red Crescent existed. People did not go about picking up the wounded in order to lengthen with maternal nursing their poor mutilated lives. Yes, but there were far fewer wounded. They were unacquainted in those days with our weapons which kill a hundred men a second; and the most sanguinary wars did not produce a twentieth part of the corpses which now lie on the battle-fields of Thrace. I fail to see, therefore, that

there is so much cause for shouting hurrah for "Civilization and Progress."

To return to these new killing engines, I must have failed to make myself clear in a previous letter, since some people have concluded in good faith that I was advocating anti-militarism. By what utter lack of logic, by what monstrous misconstruction could one pass from the feeling of horror for modern warfare to the discrediting of and hatred for these men, every day more sublime, who are compelled to wage it? As the inevitable battles turn more and more into a red butchery, should not our respect on the contrary increase in proportion, for those whose duty it is to take part in them? To our humblest soldiers let us give brass bands; let us give them gilt braid and plumes, everything that can increase their young enthusiasm and adorn them better for a noble death. Let the crowd bow as they march and salute them as the noblest children of France; let us all watch them go by with tears in our eyes, and let the young girls throw flowers at their feet! . . .

Here you have my anti-militarism frankly laid down this time. . . . Oh, yes, let us have them for ourselves, those war engines that kill quickly, that kill in heaps, and let us try to make our own

to be the most hellish. It is necessary, alas, since we are the intended prey of these neighbouring nations who invent every day some new engine to shower down bullets. But let us guard most jealously our horrible secrets, for this is where crime and disgust come in: when for the sake of gain (in order to benefit French industry) we sell them to foreigners, thus preparing wholesale killing which is not necessary.

P.S.—Before concluding, I wish to tender my apologies, sincere and spontaneous, to the Armenians, in so far at least as their attitude in the ranks of the Ottoman army is concerned. To be sure, it is not because of the protests they insert by paying for them in the Constantinople Press. No, but I have among my friends some Turkish officers. I know from them that without a doubt my early information was exaggerated, and that, in spite of many preliminary desertions, the Armenians under them fought with courage. Therefore, I am happy to be able to withdraw without reserve what I had said before on this subject. And I apologise.

IV.

The previous chapter contains on page 70 three lines, which have caused much spilling of ink :—

“The French officers of the” *Bruix* were there ; they saw Servian and Greek soldiers put out the eyes of Turkish prisoners. . . .”

Those three lines I found in an important Paris newspaper, where they had appeared two months before, without giving rise to any objection on the part of anybody. I had accepted them in full confidence because they came from an officer whose word I cannot doubt. They were besides the *only* lines which I did not think it necessary to investigate.

But as soon as they were reprinted over my name, the Captain of the *Bruix*, *diplomatically* questioned by the Governor of Salonica, Prince Nikola of Greece, thought it necessary to forward the following answer, which was inserted with much commotion in innumerable newspapers :—

SALONICA,

February 4.

HIGHNESS,

In answer to the verbal communication which Major Vachopoulo, Chief of your

General Staff, has made me to-day on your behalf, I have the honour to bring to the knowledge of Your Royal Highness the result of my inquiries. I called together all the officers of the staff on the *Bruix* and read to them the assertion which it is alleged we have made, in the book *Turquie Agonisante*, written by our countryman, a retired naval officer, Julien Viaud (Pierre Loti), that the French officers of the *Bruix* were there and saw Servian and Greek soldiers putting out the eyes of Turkish prisoners. All were unanimous in their declaration that the assertion was absolutely gratuitous, and that there is nothing either in their speech or their writings that could authorise the writer to name them as witnesses of such facts which they have never had the opportunity of witnessing.

I have reported to the Minister for the Marine the way in which we have been brought into this without our knowledge, and I am asking him to be kind enough to request the author of *Turquie Agonisante* to withdraw his allegation, which is contrary to the truth.

I beg, Your Royal Highness, etc., etc.,

DELAGE.

This cruel denial given to a comrade-at-arms would have been more easily understood if the Captain of the *Bruix* had found nothing to object to in the attitude of the Allies towards the vanquished—and such was not the case, as I am going to show. There followed, of course, instant rejoicing, and insults were heaped upon me in a certain section of the Press. “Look, here is what his documentation is worth!” and the mean little Levantine rags, exulting because there is to be found at last a French officer who *appeared* to deny the atrocities committed by the liberators, spat on my name in the filthiest fashion.

Then the naval officer, from whom I had received the incriminating affirmation, came loyally and courageously forward to relieve my responsibility by publishing the following letter:—

“M. Pierre Loti, answering the denial inflicted by the Captain of the *Bruix*, *à propos* of the atrocities perpetrated in Salonica by the Orthodox troops, declares in terms which touch me deeply that his information came to him from a French officer whose word for him is beyond doubt. I am that officer—I, Claude Farrère—I it was who gave the information, and I hasten to bring my testimony. I it was

• who, much before M. Pierre Loti, published more than once this same fact, always indicating the sources whence I had it; and never has there been one single denial offered me, to this very day.

Here is, besides, the passage which I copy exactly from a letter—not a *diplomatic* letter, this one, but all private—which an officer of our navy, on board a cruiser in the Levant (not the *Bruix*) wrote to his wife on December 6th, 1912. This letter is no longer in my hands, but I have taken the precaution to have it read by twenty witnesses whom nobody could challenge: MM. Letellier, editor of the *Journal*; Lepage, general secretary of the *Journal*; Arthur Meyer, editor of the *Gaulois*; P. de Cassagnac, editor of the *Authorité*; and many others.

Here is the passage:—

‘The telegrams from the Captain of the *Bruix* are those of a man who sees things as they are. He does not mince his words and what he relates is horrible. Everywhere it is pillage, arson, murder. Greek and Bulgar Regulars put out the eyes of their prisoners, it is said here of 4,000 prisoners.’

I cannot give the name of the officer who

wrote this, but I vouch for his honour on my own. Besides many of the witnesses whose names I have given know him personally, and know that they can rely entirely on any assertion that comes from him.

This letter does not say, I admit, that it was the Captain of the *Bruix* who saw eyes being put out ; the member of your staff, in all good faith I am sure, made a mistake when he printed, formally over my name, the article that M. Pierre Loti merely quoted. And the *diplomatic* contradiction, which is so loudly inflicted upon us, is cautiously specialised on this question of detail ; " eyes put out." Well, the atrocities pointed out by the Captain of the *Bruix* were others, that is all. "*Pillage, arson, murder !*" Pillage, arson, murder, is not this enough already ? And that is a sentence, at least, which nobody will be able truthfully to deny.

As to the subject of eyes being put out, if one is especially keen on this kind of atrocity, one can find any amount of witnesses in the East who are unimpeachable, and also as to noses, lips and ears cut off. No one in good faith can any longer argue about the Balkan massacres and atrocities. The Foreign Press is full of them, and the French Press alone has

taken up an attitude of silence. The aim of this letter is, therefore, not to assert them, that would be useless, but merely to establish the fact that on board the *Bruix* they could not fail to be acquainted with them.

As for M. Pierre Loti, what can be said of the stubbornness with which people continue to insult him for the *Bruix* incident ; what can be said of those who persist in denying that his book is a faithful book, every affirmation of which rests on a precise document or on the word of a man of honour ? ”

Well, of all the newspapers which have published so noisily the denial given me, there has not been found one to insert the explanation, *the moral denial of the denial !*

V.

December 28, 1912.

Even if the Turks had been guilty during this war of all the misdeeds which, in spite of thousands of authorised testimonies, are so stubbornly attributed to them, why should *we* overwhelm them with so much hatred ? Have we forgotten that France was among the nations which, at the beginning of the hostilities, solemnly

guaranteed to them the integrity of their territory, and that, by putting a stop by false pledges to their military preparations, we have contributed to their disaster? * How could we restrain our indignation in face of this outburst of insults in the French Press, which was in the past well disposed to them, and would have extolled them had they succeeded. At most we could have expected it from some ultra-sectarian newspapers which would still almost extol the St. Bartholomew massacre, or the Dragoonades, and which, by a mean misconstruction of the teaching of Christ, admit the possibility of forcing the Cross upon other people with the aid of cannon. There is something incongruous besides and absurd in their attitude, since in Turkey these same Roman Catholics have no worse enemies than the Orthodox, and get on a hundred times better with the Turks than with the former. How the popes of the Bulgarian Exarchism must laugh in their unkempt beards to see our "clericals"

* It is known that, on the strength of these fallacious pledges, Turkey consented a few days before the declaration of war to dismiss a whole contingent of her soldiers. Thus taken by surprise she found herself obliged to send to the front, during the first vital days, young recruits who could have had no time to be instructed; and Christians, Bulgars or Greeks, incorporated since the granting of the Constitution, who, of course, fought badly against men of their own stock.

rejoice at their victory. But these Bulgars, they have a bitter hatred for the "papists," how can anyone be unaware of it in France? It is sufficient to read contemporary history in order to find material proofs of this everywhere. In the Holy Land, is it not the Turkish police that protects the French clergy against the armed attacks of the secular and regular Orthodox clergy? Have we forgotten that even in our own times, in 1873, three hundred Greek monks, armed as brigands, invaded the Holy Grotto in Bethlehem, wounded the Franciscan monks who were praying there, sacked and pillaged the sanctuary and tore away the very marble plates which covered the Crèche? In 1898, in this same church, a Greek fanatic killed the verger and fired revolver shots at the French monks who were passing in procession. In 1901, on the threshold of the Holy Sepulchre, Greek monks made a premeditated attack on Franciscan monks and managed to wound grievously fifteen of them before the Turkish police came to their rescue. So recently as 1907, did not the Greeks of Constantinople carry out an abominable campaign against our Lazarists, who manage at Galata the great college of Saint Benedict? . . . And such examples abound! They could be

given *ad infinitum*. Depend upon it, on the day when the intolerant Bulgarian Cross displaces the Crescent, all our monks and nuns will have no choice left but to close down the thousands of schools and colleges which they run unhampered in Turkish countries.

Finally, in spite of all, I can still understand that certain extreme Catholics may have been lured by the word "Crusade," thrown out with so much audacious skill by Ferdinand of Coburg. But the others, who are unmoved by any idea of creed, and have not even the excuse of being blinded by fanaticism, why do they join in the chorus of insult? Does not the distress of the defeated, do not a hundred thousand corpses still lying where they fell command at least a little respect? If the Turks have been guilty, it was not against us; would it not be more decent to remain silent in the presence of their agony? How can anyone dare, remembering the charnel-house of Hademkeui, to indulge in sarcasm, in the drawing of low and foul caricature! Petty daubers are drawing cartoons in which they represent the Khalif and even the Prophet in clownish attitudes. Scrawlers (who have, of course, never set foot in Turkey) take advantage of the gloomy topic to expectorate novels (great

historical novels, if you please) which are called *The Tigers of the Bosphorus*—or the *Monsters of Stambul*.

Lately, a young Parisian wireless operator, in the service of Bulgaria, having intercepted a message sent from Stambul towards the unhappy and heroic Adrianople, asking for news, himself answered the question by the lewd expression attributed to Cambronne; a correspondent of a well-known newspaper declared that this action was “most energetic and very French!” To what depth of caddishness have we then fallen?

These slanderers of the vanquished cannot realize the sorrowful surprise, the great disillusion which they are spreading in Moslem lands concerning French sentiment. Two letters, among many others, have on this subject seemed to me characteristic, and I will quote some of the passages.

The following is signed “A group of young Moslem girls” :—

“How pleased we are to see that in this Europe, so material and so perfidious, there is a heart which takes pity on us !

After the terrible crisis which we have just gone through, the East will close itself more than ever to that boasted civilization which

people want to force on them, and which, so far, the East desired without knowing very much about it. More than ever, will the Turk take refuge in the past, in the sweet and beautiful past where the dream—a word which has lost its significance with you—was his whole life. . . .

Most of the great diplomatists allege that this war opens a new era. Yes, that is quite true. The events of the present year have dispelled all our illusions concerning the European nations, and especially France, who was most dear to us. There is nothing left of that feeling of admiration which we in our simplicity had for your fine words, your great actions, and your high principles. Your words are hollow, your actions are interested, and your principles are sterile; it was sufficient that the wind of interest should blow to scatter them all.

To us, in the past, the word European meant 'superior.' But at the present time we have the opportunity to weigh it, this superiority of Europe; it is asserted with artillery and acts of injustice. You, who know us so well, tell us, do we deserve this punishment?"

The second letter emanates from the Great

Sheikh of the Dervishes—dancing and others. I smile when I think that, for the French public, so ill-instructed on Turkish matters, a Chief of Dervishes must stand as a kind of half-savage sorcerer, with, of course, an enormous Crescent set on his head. He is, on the contrary, under his tall felt hat, a peaceful and gentle monk of exquisite refinement and of a high literary culture, who speaks and writes very pure French, as one can judge by the following faithful quotation :—

“France had so far deemed herself the champion of the vanquished ; to us, Easterners, that was her most glorious title ; there radiated from her this ideal, which attracted us all. This explains why we were so eager to become initiated into her language, her literature and her civilization. To-day she deserts her generous traditions. The newspapers seem to undertake the task of turning public opinion against us, and there are only a few souls, more directly cognizant with the facts, who show their indignation before so much injustice, etc., etc.

DERVISH HAJI SELAHEDDIN.”

Yes, they still loved us in Turkey owing to the ancestral tradition, which dated back for many years and was still very strong. The

saying—which is no longer true to-day, alas—the old saying : “ The Mediterranean Sea is a French lake,” was still justified in that one corner of the Levant. In spite of German penetration, both military and commercial, whatever came from France, habits, language, fine arts, still preserved over there a kind of superior charm which could be compared to no other. The wrong of having ordered from Germany the new killing machines could only be laid to the charge of the Turkish Government, and the nation is not responsible for it. In any case this only constitutes an episode in disagreement with four centuries of faithfulness. Until the deep moral disillusionment which we have just caused them by our insults, the Turks loved us and still set us on our ancient pedestal. We stood in their eyes for noble and lofty thoughts, the flight towards the ideal, generosity, elegance. And then they fancied we loved them also, and it was towards France that they were accustomed to turn their eyes in the hour of trouble, to find there, if not material support, at least sympathy and comfort. They have been chilled since, through irony and insults, and a prejudice that cannot be removed is now rising against our secular influence in the East.

• They must know, nevertheless, these poor vanquished people, that they retain the esteem and affection of the Frenchmen who have lived amongst them—and these deserve to be listened to. I am receiving quantities of letters in which this esteem is spontaneously asserted, letters from diplomats, from clergymen, from merchants, whose lives were spent in Turkey ; they all write to me : “ Stand up. Continue to stand up for this people so deeply faithful, tolerant and kind.”

I said tolerant ; for the Turkish people never ceased to show tolerance since they first entered Europe. They could be held up as an example to France who persecuted the Protestants so brutally in the past, in the name of Catholicism, to France, who, even to-day, in the name of “ Free-thought,” is persecuting the humble Sisters of Mercy, friends of the ailing and destitute. Not only have the Turks, at the beginning of modern times, given refuge to the unhappy Jews hounded out of Spain ; but as soon as they arrived from Asia, did they not leave religious freedom to the people they conquered ? When they subsequently committed massacres, when they tarnished their history with those lamentable stains, it was not because of the Cross ; it was due to one of those outbursts of hatred, too

warranted alas, against those who in Turkish lands, justified themselves in Christ. The Cross, but the Moslems of Stambul had donned it, sewn on their breasts, in the first days of the Constitution, in order to fraternise better with their Christian subjects! Under their domination, the nations of Macedonia had, but yesterday, their own churches, their own schools, their own languages *without being forced to learn that of Turkey*. The German Emperor does not deal so leniently with the Alsacians and the Poles! And all this would have lasted doubtlessly without oppression or friction if the subject races,—whose desire for freedom is, however, too legitimate and lofty for me to discuss,—had shown less fanaticism and less brutality. But the Macedonians had their brigands and their bombs, the Bulgars had their *Comitadjis*, whose atrocities are now past all reckoning. As for the Montenegrin peasants, their touching custom of cutting off the noses of their Moslem neighbours, when they can catch a few in the course of incessant skirmishes, is not sufficiently known. I have seen with my own eyes, near that lawless frontier, quantities of poor Turks who were thus Christianly mutilated. . . .

Well, yes, I do my best to defend Islam, as I have been asked to on all sides. But my voice

is drowned in the thousand clamours of all who are ignorant of the facts, and who are biassed by the paid calumnies they read and the absurd legends they hear. It is primarily through ignorance that they insult the Turks, through astounding ignorance of the conditions of the country. Then, again, they mistake the Government for the nation—a Government which cannot be defended any more than their administration or their commissariat. And they even go so far as to confuse the real Turks with that miscellaneous collection of sharpers from all Balkan and Levantine races who sport a fez in order to live among the Turks like corroding parasites, gnawing everything to the bone, and whose fraudulent practices and usury ruin whole villages, and almost excuse the worst retaliations by the rugged and honest peasants of Anatolia, roused at last. . . .

It is strange also to see the practical side of the Eastern question escaping the attention of the mass of our countrymen who are now kneeling before the victors. But we have in Turkey two and a-half milliards of francs invested which has been multiplying for years—multiplying almost too much, I should say—what will become of this money, these savings of ours, in the hands of the invaders?

Especially have we got our schools, sectarian and non-sectarian, which hold at least 110,000 scholars who speak our language correctly. When the Balkan Peninsula becomes Bulgarian or Greek all these will be closed. °The teaching of French will disappear at the same time from all those Moslem high schools where it is obligatory. Alas! There will then soon be one more country where our dear language will gradually disappear.

VI.

THE KNIGHTS-ERRANT.

A newspaper illustration lies before me: it depicts the four allied kings on horseback, "ready to resume hostilities." Here we have them, then, the four knights-errant, behind their armies, through ruts of mud and blood and crimson streams, advancing in the name of Christ!

In front we see Ferdinand of Bulgaria, he who talked loudest of the Cross, who used it like a big drum to urge on the sectarians and the artless mob. His vulture-like profile is well-known, and the malignant gleam of his tiny tapir

eyes, as if bored with a gimlet through the folds of pendulous skin. The past life of this Coburg, choke full of arrogance and cruelty in private is well known; how he had his stepsister, the unhappy Princess Louise of Coburg, incarcerated, —guess why,—how he tortured his first wife, Princess Maria-Luisa of Parma, whose sorrowing ghost would tell a long story if it were possible to conjure it. Arrogant and cruel in private in very truth, but how cowardly at first on his little rickety throne, abandoning to Stambuloff the task of ridding him of those in his way, even prudently crossing the frontier on the days of execution, until such time as Stambuloff was himself found to be in the way and was providentially assassinated by a too mysterious hand.

Behind is sketched the sharp and evil face of Peter Karageorgevich, who ascended the throne through the horrible murder of King Alexander and his wife: we know also that he is the father of a precocious criminal who, while still a child, exercised against a servant his murderous proclivities.

Then comes the kinglet of Montenegro. Very practical this one, he had the ingenious idea of organizing at the time of declaration of war a syndicate of "bears" on the stock exchange, a

syndicate presided over by his son, which "realized," it goes without saying, on the very eve of the first hostilities. Such is the holy trio of the Knights of Christ!

Finally, scarcely perceived in the back ground of the illustration is the King of Greece, who seems astonished and ashamed to be riding in their company. Light is dawning gradually nevertheless on the Crusade with which the Cross has nothing to do; and on the manner in which the victors deal with the vanquished. In spite of the dithyrambs of the subsidized Press, in spite of the rigorous censorship cutting whole passages from the reports of the war correspondents, soon truth will out. It is confirmed that the atrocities and massacres perpetrated by the Allies surpass by far what I indicated lately: in Salonica especially, where for three days rape and massacres were perpetrated before a legion of irrefutable witnesses. Not only crude atrocities but refinements on them. It is averred that Turkish prisoners, soldiers and officers, were sent back *alive* but without noses, without legs, without eyelids, all clipped off with shears.

I cannot refrain from quoting in full, in spite of its exalted tone, the following letter from a French diplomat, highly respectable and

trustworthy, who is also well documented, having spent ten years in Macedonia :—

“CONSTANTINOPLE,
December 25, 1912.

TO MONSIEUR PIERRE LOTI,

Massacres by the Turks! To-day, let us say rather Massacres of the Turks! Yes, they are massacred: their wounded are horribly mutilated, their women are assaulted, their homes burnt and pillaged. By whom? By bands of those savage soldiers who have exercised for the last ten years in Macedonia their murderous practices. In the name of what high principle have these horrors been committed? In the name of civilization, justice and liberty! And the whole of Europe, with lips drivelling these high-sounding words, joyfully applauds those who commit such abominations. O derision! What shame!

‘In the name of the Cross,’ cries King Ferdinand! To which cross does he refer? Surely not to the Catholic Cross which he caused his son to abjure. He could not have been referring to the Orthodox Cross from which his people are separated. It can only be in the name of the Bulgarian Exarchist

Cross: in the name of that Cross which carried fire and blood through all the towns and villages inhabited by the other Christian races of Turkey in Europe; in the name of that Cross which, to-morrow, if the Turk is hounded into Asia, will lead massacres, pillage and tyranny against Greek populations, as in 1907.

We hear much about Turkish massacres ordered by one man, Abdul Hamid, but we hear nothing about the much more recent massacres organized and executed in Macedonia and even in Bulgaria by the *élite* of the Bulgarian population.

In the spreading of his calumnies the Bulgarian finds help everywhere. The Turk, resigned, and because he does not know how to, or does not care to defend himself, bears silently these ignominies.

You appeal for pity, you beg for mercy for the vanquished, but is there any feeling of pity left in Europe? Is there any nobility and generosity remaining? When we see people who, in their private offices, can only use their pen to insult the beaten we have a right to think that cowardice is now the ruling power of Society. Where is the noble sword of

France which ever was unsheathed to protect the weak? Is it in vain that our soldiers have shed their blood in the Crimea? Their ashes now resting in the Latin cemetery of Pera where, year after year, the Turks consider it a duty to come and pay homage to our braves, cry out to their comrades of France, 'Rise, come and defend our remains on which barbarians will stamp insolently. Come and protect the caps of our nuns, the gowns of our monks, the work of our teachers, the factories of our engineers, the houses of our business men and officials. Come and protect the Catholics that the nationalism and fanaticism of the Bulgars threaten to strangle in this land which has been hospitable to the French ever since the reign of the Great Sultan, this land where it is permitted to hundreds of thousands to sing "Domine, salvam fac Galliarum Gentem." "Protect, O Lord, the nation of the Gauls." Come, rush to the appeal of so many Frenchmen! That we could return to life again to give a second time our blood for the France of the East which is partly our work! Let at least the memory of our ashes inspire you.' If it is not permitted to you to unsheath your sword to defend a noble

cause in the interests of France in the East, in the name of honour do not let the vanquished be insulted! Vanquished people who have been our friends for five centuries!'

They fell like heroes. Not only had they to fight the armies of four States, but enemies still more terrible: hunger, lack of ammunition, disorder in all the branches of the army. No soldier in the world, none I say, would have been able to bear such dreadful misery. Pillage, massacres to which other soldiers would not have failed to give way in similar circumstances, the Turkish soldier has resisted generally, sometimes even with sublime abnegation. To-day error has triumphed, to-morrow truth will be known. Voices are already raised to cry aloud that injustice has been done. You have the honour, of having first protested against the weakness of Europe to whom I hope France, enlightened at last, will refuse to belong. You are right to say that there is not a Frenchman with sense and heart who, having lived among the Turks, does not associate himself ardently with the homage you are paying them.

X."

Poor Turks! Now they are denied even by the Jews from Salonica. After the era of liberty and peace which those refugees from Spain were enjoying under the domination of the Osmanlis, and after the atrocities which they have endured at the hands of their "liberators," one has been found to write, for gold evidently, to I do not know what small Levantine rag, that it would be advantageous and honourable for them to be at last governed by a "really civilized" people. It would be extremely laughable if it were not so contemptible and pitiful. I believe, however, and hope that this Jew was an exception.*

Poor Turks! At the present time, while the London Conference is at work, the Press attacks have taken a petty sarcastic tone more insulting still. Fun is made of their "dilatory methods," and the angelic patience of the Allies is glorified. Dilatory methods indeed! My God, are not all methods good in the distress in which they are now fallen through the duplicity of the great Christian nations!

And yet newspapers are to be found to announce without the slightest indignation that

* He was the exception as a matter of fact, this sad, bribed Jew. I note to the honour of his co-religionaries that all remained faithful at heart to Turkey.

Europe—this Europe who lied in the most shameless fashion, this Europe who had granted them the *status quo* of their frontiers, this Europe who by virtue of the same famous *status quo* would have forbidden them any increase of territory, had they been victors—will find herself compelled to exercise on them an effective pressure in order to force them into giving satisfaction to the *just* claims of Bulgaria by the cession of Adrianople. *Just*, the claims of the Bulgars on that town and that province! They are, on the contrary, a proof of the most outrageous iniquity. “Europe,” the Allies dare to say in an attempt to excuse their own impudence, “Europe should be grateful to us for having stopped, to please her, on the road to Constantinople which was open to us after the battle of Lule-Burgas.” But, pardon me, on this very route so easy according to them, they forget that there remained a slight obstacle; the lines of Chatalja, against which their effort broke itself in three consecutive days of bloody defeats.

Just, the pretensions of the Bulgars to Adrianople! But first of all the place did not surrender.* It is still magnificently holding out,

* This was written January 6, 1913.—Translator.

like our own Belfort in the past, and even if this town, which is dying for lack of bread—and which sees passing every day, as if in derision, under its walls and on its very railway, wagons full of food sent to the enemy—even if it fell exhausted with hunger should not, in order to leave it to Turkey, a most effective pressure be brought to bear upon Bulgaria and the mad ambition of her Prince picked up haphazard?

The Powers, in order to hide their perjured complicity in the spoliation of the Ottoman Empire, have based their action on the principle, very justifiable otherwise, of the grouping of nationalities and races. Well! Not only is Adrianople the ancient sacred capital of the Turks, full of their historic relics and of the tombs of their illustrious dead, but it is to-day an essentially Moslem town where the Bulgarians constitute but a mean minority, and the whole vilayet around is peopled with Moslems in a majority of more than two-thirds.

True this Turkish population of the countryside, to whom Ferdinand of Coburg promises without laughing a privileged situation under his future domination, will soon be nothing more than a charnel-house of corpses at the rate at

which arson and massacres* are proceeding. But, after all, in virtue of what right should the gallant remainder be sacrificed? What humanitarian etiquette will there be found to make us swallow the theft of a province, of a province which justice and common-sense alike connects with Turkey? Does it not turn one sick with disgust, this exertion of "effective pressure" on the Porte? May France, at least, become disgusted at such a task and refuse to take part in it! May that 'stain never soil our national history!

VII.

To the Editor of "L'Humanité."

Tuesday, January 28.

SIR,—You were good enough to ask me my impression of the new phases of the Turco-Bulgar tragedy. How could I refuse to give it to your journal which has all this time remained honourably impartial, and refrained from insulting the vanquished? Your request comes somewhat

* The massacres at the time of writing, in spite of the armistice, still continue in the vilayet of Adrianople. It is known that there have arrived at Salonica 20,000 Turkish peasants fleeing from the conflagrations ablaze in their villages and *starving*.

late, since everything that my conscience and my indignation compel me to say I have said already in the *Gil Blas*, the only newspaper, of all those to which I applied, that had the courage to open its columns to me, thus breaking the conspiracy of silence over the atrocities of the most Christian armies.

Moreover, on the subject of this *supreme pressure* (to use the same euphemism that you employ), which Europe is preparing to exert over Turkey in her agony, I could say nothing that would be as fair, as noble, as irrefutable as the protest of Ahmed Riza and Halil Bey, to whom you opened your columns last Sunday; nor could I remain as resigned and dignified as they did. *

In the name of what iniquity does Europe, desirous to ensure that peace she needs so much, always bring her pressure and threats to bear upon that unhappy Turkey at bay? Has not Turkey given up enough already? Why are not pressure and threats brought to bear also upon the Bulgars, who, on the contrary, have never given up anything because they felt the presence of an armed colossus behind them, and who have never departed one moment from their obstinacy and their arrogance. Why

are we not appalled by all the cowardice there is in the whole of the so-called civilised nations, who drive to the uttermost limits of despair a people to whom they had in the past promised everything, and who to-day appeals to their sense of justice and pity? Not only right, but commonsense, and the so often invoked principle of the grouping of the races command that Turkey should be left in possession of the heroic town and the province of Adrianople, which are full of mementoes of Islam, and are almost entirely peopled by Moslems, but there is also—and especially this which drives the poor Turks to distraction, and would in itself render sublime their most unreasonable pigheadedness, their most bloody revolts—their brothers, whom we wish to see bent under the malignant and ferocious Bulgarian rule. What will be their fate? In spite of the false promises of Ferdinand of Coburg, what can the thousands of Moslems left on the other side of the new frontiers expect, unless it be the continuation of those cold-blooded and systematic massacres, of this wholesale killing to which even the armistice failed to put a stop, and which will soon have transformed the country round about Constantinople into a vast field of death?

(I say this because I know it for a fact, and in spite of the minute censorship that prevents all news from coming through, in spite of the lies of a corrupted section of the Press, the whole world will in the end know it also.)

With what sorrowful stupefaction I have seen our country, out of devotion to the Slavs, associate herself even actively with this incongruous "pressure." The eminent man who directs our destinies with so much integrity, goodwill and genius will become himself once more, I hope, and remember the generous tradition of France before going further along this road which does not seem to be our own. To carry to the bitter end the annihilation of Turkey by forcing her to give up Adrianople, that would be to inflict a blot on our national history. It would also irrevocably damage our interest, it would give the death-blow to our secular influence in the East, to our thousands of schools, to our manifold industries which have all, since the days of Francis I., flourished over there with complete liberty; over there, in that Turkey so truly tolerant, who loved us to the extent of having become almost a French-speaking country.

PIERRE LOTI.

VIII.

WHERE IS FRANCE?

February 15, 1913.

Where has our dear France gone? Our generous France, who burned in the past with enthusiasm for all just causes; our France, who at the time of the iniquitous partition of Poland trembled with righteous indignation? She, who but yesterday indignantly protested against crimes more than any other nation, we find her now, alas, in the foremost rank of the pitiless pack! Yet this time . . . it is not a case, as with Poland, of dividing and of enslaving; it is the very destruction of a race which is going to be systematically carried out. We French are at the head of those who rush at the quarry. Of all the European Governments, ours seems to show the most profitless and senseless obstinacy against the victim in order to snatch the impossible, the outrageous, the ultimate concession of Adrianople and the *Ægean Islands*!

In vain do all those who have lived in the East—diplomats, clergy, sisters of the poor, engineers, manufacturers, *all those who know,*

without exception, raise a cry of alarm. Nobody cares to listen to them. They try to protest in the newspapers, but everywhere their letters are denied insertion. And so many of them write to me, as if I could do anything: "Speak for us," they say. "There is a conspiracy of silence; truth is choked, the Press is muzzled." And at the same time the worst calumnies are printed, dished up freely on every occasion against the dying Turkish nation.

Let there only be a kind of referendum, a plebiscite, a supreme consultation, which should include all the Frenchmen who have lived in the East, or worked in our schools, in our factories, in our railway exploitations, etc. All of them will testify that they have found among the Turks goodwill, hospitality, boundless tolerance, and admirable honesty; among the Balkan populations, on the contrary, unfair dealings, ferocious jealousy, brutality, and duplicity. All will speak up as I speak myself, and, because they are legion, perhaps they will be credited.

What is most surprising to me is to see the aberration of the French Catholics, who, lured by this farcical impudence of Ferdinand of Coburg—"The Cross *v.* the Crescent"—have

taken the part of their worst enemies, the Orthodox, and especially the savage Exarchists. Let them only read the modern history of Macedonia, of Thrace, and Syria! Let them only ask the chiefs of their missions over there, bishops, superiors of convents, abbots and abbesses, with whom I find myself in complete agreement on this point, and who will say with me that the danger for the Roman Christians comes from the Greek Cross, and especially from the Bulgarian Cross.

This conspiracy of silence over the Balkan atrocities, you have it now a little baffled; the facts are there, and truth is breaking out everywhere. We know now the horror of the mutilations perpetrated on Turkish prisoners, the killing *en masse* of aged men and women and children, the "flaming mosques," where the Faithful were drenched in paraffin and set alight, the young girls with their breasts cut off. We know now that, wherever the *liberators* passed, there remains nothing but corpses and smouldering ruins.

A well-known Paris newspaper (which, nevertheless, had inserted the homage paid by its war correspondents to the moderation of the Turkish soldiers) admitted the other day that the Balkan

atrocities were now indubitable, and expressed its "regret" (*sic*) that they had created a current of pity from Berlin to London, "*where they are always so ready to show emotion.*" And that same newspaper, in order to excuse its astounding "regret," declared that these crimes were but a just reaction after five centuries of horror in Thrace and Macedonia. Always that legend of the ferocious Turks, the legend so carefully prepared and so perfidiously kept up by the Balkan people! Ferocious against whom, if you please? Was it against the Jews, to whom the Turks gave the most peaceful hospitality for four centuries, while they were massacred among the Christians? Was it against us French, who, ever since the days of the Renaissance, have been welcomed by them with such goodwill and cordiality? Was it, even, at the beginning of their domination, against those Orthodox and Exarchists to whom Mahomet II. had left their churches, their schools and their language? If later they showed some harshness to these same Christian subjects, it was because they had to deal with races that were essentially brutal and murderous, and who, moreover, never ceased to perpetrate massacres upon one another. In Macedonia, for centuries, the slaughter never

ceased between Christians of opposite creeds, while every time that in a village a bloodthirsty battle burst out between Greeks and Bulgars, the two camps joined hands afterwards against the unfortunate Moslem police who rushed to restore peace, and everything ended in the burning and the pillage of the Turkish houses around. It is enough to read the reports sent by our countrymen, the French officers employed by the international gendarmerie of Macedonia to be convinced on the subject of these chronic tragedies. They all agree that the responsibility for them falls on the Bulgars. They establish even that, nine times out of ten, these tragedies were organised by the *comitadjis*, for choice in the vicinity of places where foreigners resided, in order to strike at the imagination of Europe, to arouse its unanimous verdict that the Turks were incapable of maintaining peace ; in a word, in order to prepare long beforehand this *tolle*, which at present meets the distress of the defeated Turks. To-day, now that this work of discrediting the Turks has been accomplished as desired, Bulgaria is arresting in hundreds her *comitadjis*, whom she needs no longer, and who might prove compromising. Yes, life was terrible in those fierce countries ; I admit it, but it will continue

to be so, and there can be no doubt about it, after the last Turk has been exterminated. Greece and Bulgaria have never ceased to hate one another mortally. In spite of their temporary alliance, we may expect the hour when they will begin to massacre and persecute one another afresh—to massacre and persecute at the same time, it goes without saying, the Catholics, and especially the poor Uniats (Orthodox who accept Catholicism).

The good faith of this same well-known French newspaper must have been abused, I trust, otherwise it would not have published a letter from a subscriber (on the pacification of Salonica). If we are to believe this person, everything was as it should be there, apart from some trivial inevitable disorder, which might have caused on the first days "*a little bad feeling*" (*sic*). "A little bad feeling" is truly a priceless expression. After two or three days of pillage, assault and murder, a little bad feeling might be roused at last. What means the invaders have employed to cause such a letter to be written it is not my business to find out; but I believe that it has little chance of being credited; there were too many witnesses there. Many Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, many

foreign consuls and officers and sailors of our cruisers saw it, and were appalled.

That letter contains another pearl even more precious. The writer, in order to explain this bad feeling in the European colony of Salonica, writes precisely as follows :—

“And after all, up to now, Turkey was here *res nullius*; foreigners enjoyed a preponderant situation, which could not have been secured entire under another domination whatever it was.” Is it possible to give a more categorical denial to the above-mentioned newspaper, which affirmed at the same time the cruelty of the Moslem yoke? Is it possible to pay homage that is at the same time more complete and more odiously ungrateful to all that there is of gentle and debonnair in the Turkish domination, when it has not to exert itself over races that are absolutely intractable?

But these are details over which I am wasting breath, for such inconsistencies are not worth challenging.

At the present time, the great fear which outweighs everything is the thought that the cannon are again making bloody havoc. Heroic Adrianople will fall in the end; this appears inevitable. Then the Moslem town, and all the

Moslem provinces around, will be given up to the exterminators. A crime will be committed, with the complicity of all the Christian nations—one of the greatest crimes that history has ever had to register. And, to say the least, France will have contributed to it too large a share. At least, let me say here to those that have been defeated once more that, if they do not enjoy the official sympathy of our country, there are, nevertheless, thousands of French hearts that feel for them. . .

IX.

CARNIVAL AND BARBARISM.

March 2, 1913.

At the time of writing do you know what the *Perotes* are thinking about? (Over there they call *Perotes* the Christians, Greeks and others—but Greeks especially—who inhabit Pera, a vast Levantine suburb of Constantinople.) Well, do you know what they are thinking about? Of carnival and everything that ensues—parties, balls and fancy dresses! It is so out of place, so shameful, that the Press begins at last to murmur.

Does not the most elementary education command at least that silence should be kept at such times in the great tragic town? Really, the attitude of these people justifies once more the words of Bismarck: "In the East," he said, "the only gentlemen are the Turks!"

So they are going to don fancy-dress and dance, the *Perotes*, and in the streets under their windows are passing the men entraining to the lines of Chatakdja, to the supreme slaughter. And everywhere, in tiny houses choke-full of beds that are too small for them, the wounded are lacking every necessity; they are asking for a little water, for a little bread; they call for some one to wash their festering wounds. The country, so far as you can see, is full of dead decaying under the snow. And quite close, on the other side of the bridges, in huge Stambul, now three-quarters burnt (*but only in its Turkish quarters, as it happens*), all those who have not gone to the front—women, children, old men—tramp half-naked, starving and chilled to the marrow. They will not don fancy-dress for carnival, these. Oh, dear, no; but they are surely worth the charity of a blanket, some old coat, these poor, homeless people, utterly destitute.

The *Perotes* are going to treat themselves to dances! But, thank God, the women of all the European embassies are thinking more of the wounded. At their head is the admirable wife of our ambassador, who hardly leaves the ambulance quarters and the bedside of the dying. To give another example, there are the French Sisters of the Poor, blessed by the Turks; one of the most highly respected of them was writing me yesterday: "We pray to God every day that he will leave us under the Moslem domination; what would become of us if the others came here?"

The others, that is to say, the Orthodox, and especially the Exarchists! It is not only to the Turks that they show themselves pitiless, *these*, once more they have proved it. We all know that Bulgaria rejected the repeated request of France who wished them to keep a neutral zone in Adrianople, where our people, our nuns, would not have been risking death every hour. Nor did one single newspaper condemn the following transaction. The Empress of Germany wrote with her own hand a letter to Queen Eleanore, asking her to allow some boxes of medicaments to enter Adrianople with the 'Delegation from the Red Cross Society. She met with a refusal; under

the pressure of the Bulgarian vulture the most unhappy of Queens was forced to send a negative answer. I fancy the German Emperor did not much relish this behaviour of his little *confrère*. That a besieged town allows no one to leave it, for fear of any information they might give concerning the state of the garrison, this can be easily explained; but for besiegers to deny passage to a few nurses with their sanitary material, what strategic reasons can anyone invent to excuse this callousness?

The others—the Bulgarians—before the closed eyes of accomplice Europe, proceed quietly, systematically to exterminate the Moslems in the invaded provinces. I leave on one side the reports that come from Turkish sources; you might think them exaggerated. With the Slavs, of course, there is a conspiracy of silence much more even than with us, but there are numerous French officers serving in the international gendarmerie of Macedonia,* those who have not accepted the diplomatic password, and who do not draw back; their reports, published in spite of everything, are terrible; it seems, however, that nobody in France cared to read them.

* Col. Foulon, Col. Malfeyt, etc., etc.

There are also the Clergy of the Latin Brotherhoods established in Turkey ; finally there are, in legions, unexceptionable witnesses, Austrians and Germans, officials, doctors, clergymen, officers, who, in all the foreign Press that has not been muzzled like ours, have signed the most horrible accusations. In the front ranks of those and among so many others I can quote Dr. Ernst Jaeckh, General Baumann, Col. Veit, Captain Rein, Prof. Duhring, whose reports, with evidence supported by hideous photographs, make one shudder : pillage, arson, sadic assaults, indescribable mutilations, massacres of non-combatants, previously roped together, then stabbed with bayonets and dispatched with cudgels ; old women shut up in barns which were set fire to, Moslems over whom they poured paraffin before piling them in the mosque to burn them alive. . . . Over these savage scenes there floated a low and bestial fanaticism. They broke the funeral stones inscribed with verses from the Koran, and they profaned the tombs ; they mixed the name of Christ with their murders, and it sometimes happened that the assassins forcibly baptized those they were about to murder ! More rabid still than the invaders, and greater cowards, the Ottoman Christians came out to meet them,

guided them towards the Turkish houses, beginning by the richest, denouncing the hiding-places where money or young women were to be found ; they pillaged with them, killed with them. Nor were the Turks the only ones upon whom this red frenzy was let loose, with the encouragement of Europe ; the Jews, of course, suffered almost as much as they ; the Roumanians also bore the persecution from these Exarchist Christians ; their churches were desecrated and their sacred books torn to shreds and thrown into the gutter.

A simple incident, and strangely touching, strikes me in the midst of all these horrors. Young Moslem girls, from whom their veils had been snatched—a great outrage in itself—before being thrown over to the soldiers, had smeared their faces with many coats of thick mud picked up in the ditches of the road. . . .

“In order to throw us back into Asia,” a Dervish wrote to me, “there was no need for so many crimes. We would have gone of our own accord. We would have left, of course, the conquered provinces rather than remain under the threat of the Bulgarian knife. We only needed that some time should be left to us. How many of us who succeeded in escaping the great butchery rushed to the walls of

Constantinople, and had to wait there, resigned, dignified, but starving, to wait again, for days and nights, for the boats that were to carry us over to the Asiatic coast whence came our fathers."

Yes, but it was not the clearing, it was the ferocious extermination that the *liberators* wished! And this continues, and this will still continue, as long as there will remain in the province of Adrianople one single village that is not a heap of smouldering ruins with the streets strewn with corpses. *And all the chancelleries are well aware of it*, yet all keep silence, and everywhere the public conscience is deliberately misled.*

In vain did the Turks insist upon their request that an international commission be sent to the invaded territories, urging even that it should be sent at once, while thousands of corpses of women and children are still rotting on the ground. Only Italy heeded them; but in presence of the phlegmatic refusal of another great Power, the matter was allowed to drop. Of what consequence

* There are still to be found in our country after so many irrefutable revelations small provincial newspapers to write: "the *alleged* atrocities by the Bulgarians"; the more important newspapers, however, would no longer dare to say this.

now are the demands of the Turks? They are beaten, the chancelleries have no longer need of their presence, since they have discovered another "formula," by which all their rapacities will find a much surer profit!

X.

MACEDONIAN MASSACRES AND ARMENIAN MASSACRES.

March, 1913.

I would weaken my plea for the vanquished of the East if I did not give the Allies their due. The act of brigandage, the attack on Tripoli by Italy, will never find an excuse; compared with it, the endeavour of the Balkan peoples to achieve independence seems legitimate and noble; who would think of denying it? Even after four or five centuries there is no forfeiting of one's rights over one's ancestors' land. It remains beautiful, the dream to recapture ancient cities conquered in the past, and to revive the names that were abolished; the idea of patriotism must not die. Well then, in spite of the regret and the sorrow of all those who have known, understood and loved Islam, a murmur of approval would

have followed the victors of to-day, had not their military glory been stained with so much crime and so much lying.

Their endless lies, so cunningly spread in order to mislead public opinion, are probably more odious even than their crimes which were perpetrated with the excuse of temporary excitement, caused by the smell of powder and the intoxication of blood. "*Macedonian massacres*," for how many years has that *cliché* appeared periodically in the Press through the channel of the interested Governments? They tended to represent Turkey as a bloodthirsty monster, and, besides, utterly unable to rule the country otherwise than by despotism and murder. With documents and references to back me, I will say something presently about these alleged massacres, the responsibility of which never fell on those who were accused of them. "*Turkish atrocities*," that is the second *cliché*, which has been used since the outbreak of the hostilities and which to the credulous crowd carries a certain weight, owing to drastic censorship. In vain did the war correspondents (those with a conscience, at least) establish the loyalty of the Turkish troops, and their moderation, which was most of the time admirable. In vain did they

show their indignation at the acts of savagery committed by the victors. An ever vigilant censorship like that of Italy in Tripoli cut out whatever damning evidence there was in their reports, or else suppressed the reports altogether. When by chance some crushing revelation nevertheless reached the French Press, they maintained a conspiracy of silence, and took care that it was not inserted, and the cliché *Turkish atrocities*—occasionally correct, I grant, but always in retaliation—came back like a hateful chorus printed in big leaded type. But there were too many witnesses for truth to remain hidden. The Austrian Press, the German Press, with whom silence is not a law as it is with us, began to relate with surprise stories of unutterable crimes. Then there were our French officers in the employment of the international police force of Macedonia, they also had seen; and it was difficult to intimidate them, to keep them silent; thus, gradually, great indelible, opprobrious stains began to soil the record of the conquerors whose cause at bottom was nevertheless fine and just, and who, in spite of the utter lack of decency with which they came from behind like hyenas on a prey mortally wounded, still command our admiration by their courageous victories.

As I wrote at the outbreak of the war, it appears that the Greeks showed themselves the least cruel, although even they were too much so. It appears especially that their officers, as a rule, refrained from pillage and rape. In any case, never did an order for useless butchery emanate from their princes. As to their most charming queen, the Turks are the first to repeat with veneration all the good she did during her stay in Salonica, relieving thousands of their brothers who rushed in from all sides, hounded from their villages by fire and massacre.

But the Servians, but the Bulgarians! . . . Nothing is left after the progress of their armies, which, ferociously murderous themselves, carried after them, in order to complete the destruction, bands of *Comitadjis*, clad in skins, hordes more terrifying than those of Attila. With them, moreover, the chiefs set the example; the higher officers, instead of punishing, urged on, or tolerated. In these merciless butcheries everyone was an accomplice. . . .

What I am now writing has been known already for a long time in Austria and Germany. They are beginning to learn it in France, in spite of everything; I do not pretend to be the

first to teach it. Even this most horrible side of the affair is well-known : that, even in the regions where fighting is over, the extermination continues, calm and cold, because it is not a question of vanquishing, but of annihilating the Moslem race, and because every vestige must be blotted out ; the mosques must be burnt and the minarets pulled down, the graves wrecked ; the verses from the Koran inscribed on the walls and on the tombs must be broken up everywhere. It is the legendary barbarians, it is the Huns that are passing ! In the middle of Europe, in the twentieth century, these mountaineers still retain the dark mediæval cruelty, still slaughter as of old, perpetrating deeds in the very possibility of which people had ceased to believe.

To all this, the Christian nations of the West, the Foreign Offices, informed at last, obliged at last to admit that the new Crusaders hold the record for barbarity, answer through hypocrisy as much as through ignorance : " It was caused by the reaction after four or five centuries of torture." But let us read again the old chronicles of Macedonia, written by impartial witnesses, by Latin Christians, and by Jews. Let us seek information on the spot from all foreigners who have inhabited this country of

terror—and we shall then find out who were the torturers, the murderers: Bulgarians always, *Comitadjis*, or simple *Exarchist* fanatics, pillaging with arms, murdering Orthodox or Osmanlis without preference, until such time as the Turkish police, otherwise called the *International Macedonian Police*, arrived to restore order with their rifles, and to punish the assassins. Life was becoming so intolerable that, a few years before the present war, the Greeks, exasperated by the crimes of their accomplices of to-day, had thought of allying themselves with the Sultan against the Government of Sofia. Such were the notorious massacres of Macedonia, which the Bulgarians have for a long time misinterpreted to their own advantage in order to stir up Europe against Turkey. Our French officers in service over there, who many a time took part in these repressions of Balkan lawlessness, have set down the facts in their reports, but their voices were silenced.

In Asia Minor, where there are no *Comitadjis*, do not the Greeks live in complete harmony with the Turks? So many letters which they have spontaneously written to me suffice to prove how light seems to them the yoke of Islam. What a peaceful country is all

that region which extends from Smyrna to the confines of Syria! Thieves are unknown there, and one can sleep at night with open doors; a patriarchal serenity still reigns there,

And the Roumanians, almost our brothers these, who represent among the nations once subjects of the Crescent the true, intellectual and moral élite, the Roumanians, do they bear malice to these Turks who were once their masters? No one would dare contend it. No, no, it is only for their former companions of tutelage, the Bulgarians, that they profess a constant inveterate hatred.

And the unhappy Spanish Jews, where did they seek refuge when Christians were exterminating them? With these very Turks, who have given them for four and five centuries the most tolerant hospitality, and whom they never cease to bless.

Oh, I know, there have been the massacres of Armenians! Here it is no longer calumny, it is no longer a legend, it is the bewildering reality. Here you have a great blot on the history of those whom, on my soul and conscience, I believe absolutely to be worth defending, but whom, nevertheless, I cannot support against and in spite of everything, when they are guilty. There

are, besides, in them so many first-class qualities, so much deep-rooted honesty, so much compassion and tolerance that they do not need to be blindly defended; that would be to damage their cause and to do them injury. The Armenian massacres, that is perhaps the crime* they are atoning for so terribly to-day. In any case, it is owing to these ill-omened days of 1896 that Europe withdraws her pity from their sufferings. In this I cannot absolve the Turks, but merely invoke in their favour extenuating circumstances.

Heaven forbid that I should wish to depreciate the Armenian race. It is degenerate to-day, as happens to all the races which have the supreme misfortune no longer to possess a country of their own; its courage has weakened. The Armenians have turned to mercantilism and usury, much more even than the Jewish race† which had been led to it before them by a

* It is interesting against this admission of Pierre Loti to quote the well-known sentence from M. V. Bérard, who is, perhaps, the greatest authority on this wretched business: "For the execution of the massacres there was not found in Asia Minor one real native Turk." M. V. Bérard's opinion agrees on this point with that of Sir Mark Sykes. See his book, "Dar-ul-Islam."—Translator.

† There is on this subject a Turkish proverb, which no one can accuse me of having forged for the occasion, "It requires four Jews to make one Armenian."

similar fate. But the Armenians have been great and glorious in the past, and, in spite of blemishes acquired in servitude, their misfortunes, so many unprecedented misfortunes, which have not ceased to overwhelm them, should render their race somewhat sacred to us.

We should probably have to seek far back into the depths of the ages in order to discover the origin of that fierce hatred between Armenians and Turks, who seemed in the past nations made to bear and even to unite with one another. The first great *mutual* massacres which moved Europe took place in the remote parts of Asia Minor; the Kurds were engaged in them much more than the Turks proper; they were battles more than massacres, and their history is not properly known. In the rough countries of Zeitoun and Sassoon, in the mountains bristling with rocks and forests, Armenians, who had preserved their ancient warlike qualities resisted, with arms, the Moslem domination;—who would think of reproaching them for it? The Moslems repressed their rebellions,—was it not natural? And they repressed, as a matter of fact, too terribly, after the fashion of the Christian Allies of to-day in Thrace and Macedonia.

But the murderous refinements after the battle,

the cool cruelty with which they are taxed, I will take the liberty to say that all this was exaggerated for the purpose of the cause, so long as they are related only by Armenians, even were they Armenian prelates.

As to the massacres of Constantinople in 1896, which caused most emotion abroad, one could not throw the onus of it on the Turks, unless one forgot with what violence the *Armenian Revolutionary Party* had begun the attack. Having announced their intention to set fire to the town, which would without doubt, said their posters impudently stuck on the wall, *be very soon reduced to a desert of ashes* (sic), a party of young conspirators—admirable in their daring, I admit—had taken possession of the Ottoman Bank to blow it up, while others covered the quarter of Psammatia with blood. For eighteen terrible hours dynamite explosions went on and everywhere the Armenian bombs, thrown from the windows, fell thick on the heads of the soldiers.

Tell me, what nation in the world would not have answered such attempts by exemplary punishment? Take, for instance, a Slav nation, since it is the Slavs who to-day shower anathema on the Turks. Let us choose, say, the Russian nation, our friend, who is of them all the most

civilized and the best at heart. During our own times the Russian nation persecuted the Jews for acts of usury much less exasperating than those committed by the Armenians. What would she have done if these same Jews, armed with revolvers, had taken possession of the Imperial Banks, thrown bombs everywhere and threatened to fire Moscow? What would she have done if, besides all that, the Czar, her religious chief, had, like the Khalif, sent out the order of extermination? Of course, a massacre is never excusable, nor do I pretend to absolve my Turkish friends. I only mean to extenuate their fault, as is only just. In normal times, debonnair, tolerant to a fault, gentle like dreamy children, I know that they also have outbursts of extreme violence, and that sometimes red clouds pass before their eyes. That is only when an ancient hereditary hatred, always justified moreover, is roused again in their hearts, or when the voice of the Khalif calls them to some supreme defence of Islam. . . .

Islam! Islam, which nevertheless bears millions of men who are prepared to defend it unto death, Islam, alas, is dying out like a great sun near the hour of evening. "No doubt it will throw out again, as it sets, fine red rays; for

some few years of grace it may still light the Asiatic sky, and its defenders will before their agony behave like heroes, but in spite of all I feel it plunging gradually into the abyss, where are annihilated the religions and the civilizations that have had their time; with it will pass away also meditation, dreams and prayer; on our earth soon too small, all trembling to-day with the stirring of men who enslave electricity, hammer steel, and get drunk on spirits, there is no more room for contemplative and tender-hearted nations who drink only water from the springs and place their hopes in God.

Islam! Perhaps Europe, so perfidious and utilitarian, might have had some interest nevertheless in defending it still. Europe has been not only criminal by driving the Turks to extreme despair, by exterminating all the healthy and honest population around the town where stands the marvellous mosque of Selim II.; she has been improvident also, for, to that crime, she owes the interminable prolongation of the war. Had she known how to moderate the exorbitant pretensions of the conquerors, drunk with victory, she would have caused peace to be concluded, and taken up again in the East the thread of her commercial enterprises

which seem to occupy her entirely. It is in the future especially that she will bear more heavily the consequences of her crime—that will come' later, when on the Bosphorus shall be enthroned the formidable capital of an Empire of Southern Slavs, and when the intolerant exclusiveness of these parvenus shall have replaced open Ottoman hospitality.

For a day will inevitably come, alas, when Constantinople will no longer lift on high her thousand crescents; when Stambul shall be Stambul no longer, when she shall have lost her minarets, her domes, her stelas, the peace of her small shady places, her unutterable mystery, and the chant of her muezzins every evening. She will have become modern and ugly; she will be *any* town, over which barbarism will hover' without hope;—the blackest barbarism, that of a mushroom nation which sees in the idea of progress nothing but noise, speed, electricity, smoke and trumpery wares. And this fall of the town of the Khalifs shall mark not only the end of Turkey, as the arrival of Mahomet II. marked for the historians the end of the Middle Ages; it seems that it will herald also an hour infinitely more funereal and serious, the hour when Islam and with it all the exquisite civilizations of the

past, shall completely disappear under the rush of the new Civilization, more greedy and more deadly. The page shall be turned over a whole period of human history, a period of calm, dream, and faith. That will bring about everywhere the definite triumph of the European races, which have become the great killers, because they have perfected their explosives and undermined the eternal hopes. The dawn of a new era, which promises to be appalling. . . .

XI.

LETTER ON THE FALL OF
ADRIANOPLE.

March 27.

"The fall of Adrianople. The town in flames!" Will those who read this news in big type in this morning's paper imagine all that is dreadful and horrible in this : to fall into the hands of the Bulgarians!

Alas! Such is with us the strength of prejudice that the sublime defence of Adrianople did not even move the French hearts, although these same people had given Belfort its crown of glory. Such is the degree of aberration that even the journalists dared tax with barbarism the letter from the heroic Chukri Pasha, declaring, after months of anguish and unutterable sufferings, that he would burn the town down rather than surrender. Admirable at all times and in spite of everything this letter was justified if by nothing else than the cruelty of the besiegers who were bellowing round the walls.

No one of us, even after the invasion of the Prussians in 1870, has even a slight idea of what this is going to be, this falling into the hands of the Bulgarians!

This will not be like the fall of Janina, whose defenders taken to Athens were cheered by the crowd on their arrival. It will not even be like the fall of Salonica, where, however, terrible excesses were committed. No, this promises to be so savage and so monstrous that, in this extremity, to burn everything is the only thing that is left. When the heavy boots of the bearded and uncouth victors have soiled the marvellous mosque of Selim II., the adorable funeral kiosks and the holy tombs, then will commence pillage, rape, murder as they have taken place wherever these malicious Christians with their shrapnel, have passed.

Moslems of Adrianople! Poor besieged people! To have endured for so long the martyrdom, the privations and ceaseless fighting in this huge death-trap, to see at last the day when the murderers enter; to feel that there is no means of escape in the surrounding country where the slaughter has been going on for months; to think that everyone of them will go through it in the end, that even the cries of the little

children will not have the power to soften those hearts, that there will be no safe hiding-places where one could die of hunger without blows from the butt-ends of rifles or bayonet wounds; *to know beforehand that there will be no mercy. . . .*

May I be mistaken in my gloomy forebodings! May this chance king who knows with hellish cunning how to exploit the fanaticism and the wild energy of his people, may he be filled with remorse, and this time restrain a little the onslaught of his soldiers in this town where foreigners will be witnesses. May he restrain them, were it only out of fear for the verdict of history, and to spare to his name, oversoiled already with bloody mud, the stain of fresh massacres.

April 10, 1913.

P.S.—A fortnight has elapsed already since the fall of Adrianople. As we might have foreseen, the official telegrams of the usual thorough censorship tell us that the victors have been magnanimous, and that peace and joy have returned to the town. A few English witnesses, however, are beginning to unfold more sinister tales: “the camp of the Turkish prisoners,” they

say, "is an awful charnel house, where every day they die in hundreds of cold and hunger." There is also cause to fear for the fate of those detachments of the defeated prisoners, whom the Bulgarians carry away (*"in order to place them in better barracks in towns in the interior"*). Will not a fate overtake these similar to that of the prisoners from Macedonia, who were thus taken away under the same pretext, and whom at the first halting place, when they felt themselves sufficiently far from indiscreet eyes, they savagely murdered? Therefore, do not let us be too confident, alas! It is only later on that the real truth will, with difficulty, filter through to us. In the meantime, there is every reason to doubt the veracity of these fine telegrams after so many belated but irrefutable revelations which come gradually to us bringing always more amazement and always more horror!

COMPLEMENTARY NOTES.

I am giving a few letters, or extracts from letters, which I only received after the printing of my book and which testify again, not only to the Christian atrocities but to the hatred of the Orthodox for the Catholics and the "Uniats." I have chosen the most typical among the innumerable letters which have reached me and are still reaching me now: but why these more than others which bring the same overwhelming evidence? I fear I chose too hastily; they should all be published! . . . At least among those I am going to quote somewhat haphazard there is not one the writer of which is not known to me and whose absolute veracity I could not vouch for.

At the time when these complementary notes are already in type I receive the detailed account of the wholesale slaughter committed in the neighbourhood of Roptchoz, Doïran, Kilkish, and Seres. In these districts alone fifty-two hamlets and villages, of which I have a list, have

been gutted and destroyed ; the men have been massacred, the women assaulted, a few of the latter converted by force to Orthodoxy, and then carried away by the Allies for the use of the soldiers! . . . It is too late to publish all this, too late to publish the letters and documents which continue to reach me every day : this dreary book cannot be endless ; we must finish.* Besides the case is heard, for all men of heart and good faith. We all know on which side are the assassins.

•

Politicians affirm that the interest of our country is now with the Allies ; the thesis might be perhaps defended, although it is infinitely dangerous. But that France, our dear France, should have suddenly become a country that shows no more indignation at the most awful abominations, that is a sign of decadence, alas ! and an omen of adversity.

* I have thought it necessary to translate all the documents vouched for by Pierre Loti, but a similar dossier could be established, and may yet be established, composed entirely of letters and articles written by Englishmen. I need not insist here upon the long letter sent from Constantinople, on September 4th, by Mr. E. Ashmead-Bartlett to the *Daily Telegraph* and published on September 10th.—TRANSLATOR.

I.

Another letter from M. Claude Farrère to the Gil Blas, a propos of the incident of the Bruix.

I return to the subject of the fall of Adrianople. . . . But I am much mistaken if it is not the last time. I do not believe that many people, even those of the worst faith, will dare cavil at the document which I am bringing forward.

I crave pardon from those to whom this document will bring a feeling of nausea.

First a word of explanation.

Three or four months ago, in December last, one of my comrades, a naval officer on board one of the ships of the Levant Squadron, wrote to his wife a private letter, in the course of which he depicted in indignant terms the abominations perpetrated by the Greek and Bulgarian troops in Thrace and Macedonia.

That letter was shown to me and, in my turn, I showed it to many notable Parisians. One of them, M. Raoul Aubry, wrote then, under the form of an interview with me, a very fine article in which the letter in question was quoted.

Relying on the precise terms of that article, which I was wrong not to read again, word for

word, my respected master Pierre Loti wrote, in his turn, in his chivalrous book *Turquie Agnissante* that "the officers of the *Bruix* had seen the Greek and Bulgarian troops put out the eyes of their Turkish prisoners."

Well, these officers had not really *seen*,—I mean seen with their own eyes, what you call seen,—the atrocity reported above. Requested by Prince Nikolas of Greece they were therefore obliged to admit as much officially, and many people, the very people I was referring to just now, people of bad faith, tried to transform this declaration, a visual one if I may say so, into a denial inflicted by the officers of the *Bruix* on Pierre Loti.

From this it was but a step to conclude that the Balkan Allies never put out the eyes of any Turkish prisoners.

And that step some not very commendable journalists tried slyly to take by writing various nasty articles at the beginning of this month, March, 1913.

Unfortunately for them one of those articles fell, on March 11th, under the eyes of my comrade on board one of the ships of the Levant Squadron, the naval officer who had written in December last the letter in question,

the source of my previous documentation and the origin of all the trouble.

And that officer,—whose name I persist in keeping secret, because I do not wish to expose him to the knives of the assassins, of these so-called soldiers, whom he treats as we shall see,—immediately seized his pen and wrote to me on the first indignant impulse another letter, which I am quoting.

I should hate to change even a comma in it; and I am only suppressing the dates and the signature for the very good reason given above.*

To Lt. Claude Farrère, 5, rue de l'Echelle, Paris.

On board the——

From X——, (Turkey).

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have just this moment read, in *Le Petit Var* of March 2nd, which reached us to-day, a rigmarole about the controversy between Loti and the officers of the *Bruix*. I thought of course that it was you who had supplied Loti with his information and I now understand that it was what

* The Editor of the *Gil Blas*, while associating himself with the just indignation of Claude Farrère, takes the responsibility of suppressing in the letter referred to a few energetic terms with which the writer brands the facts which he relates,—this only out of respect due to the lady readers of this paper.

I sent to you. I do not now remember the exact terms I used at the time to describe to you the atrocities committed in European Turkey, but what I can tell you is that I maintain without qualification everything that I related to you and I thank you for not having doubted me. Those notes had been written from day to day and while the impression of the events was still fresh. Besides I find the facts described in my papers with the collection of wireless telegrams relating to them. All this is also quite clear in my memory. Since there seems to be a discussion on the matter I deem it advisable to add a few details which I had not given you because of the exaggerated length of my previous letters.

As you say, quite rightly :—" *The denial of the officers of the Bruix was WHOLLY DIPLOMATIC and certainly bore only on the expression 'SEEN WITH THEIR OWN EYES.'*" People are not of course in the habit of conveying us to these little festivities (although it is sometimes possible to commit indiscretions, as you will see presently). I do not believe I am committing one against professional secrecy by sending you the extracts of telegrams from the *Bruix*, which, sent uncoded by wireless, have therefore nothing confidential in them. They have been besides intercepted by all

the foreign cruisers and then partly published in various Levantine newspapers. Here goes. On November 14th I read: "*Moslem notabilities have renewed to me to-day their urgent demands for protection from the murders and abominable excesses committed by Greek soldiers. . . . I am overwhelmed with complaints from FRENCHMEN ROBBED AND ILL-TREATED BY THE GREEKS. . . .*"

Under the date November 17th: "*Irrefutable testimony is afforded me on the subject of the atrocities committed by the Christians of the province of Salonica. IT DEALS WITH A GENERAL MASSACRE undertaken in especially odious circumstances. . . . TURKISH SOLDIERS BENEFITING BY THE CAPITULATION OF SALONICA and sent forward into the interior HAVE BEEN ASSASSINATED ON THE ROAD. . . .*" Remember, this came from the *Bruix*.

I could quote you many others, but these are, I believe, sufficiently clear and categorical. They do, besides, the greatest honour to the captain who dared to phrase them in that form and transmit them uncoded. This is what I told you, I believe, concerning the *Bruix*.

As for the tale of the blinding of the Turkish prisoners, I have, of course, not witnessed the operation, but it was reported to us on many

sides in *Christian territory* and *especially by* TWO FRENCHMEN IN THE EMPLOY OF A GREAT LOCAL ADMINISTRATION. Moreover, I cannot conceive what reason one could have to doubt it honestly, for doughty deeds like these are not so very rare in these parts. Believe me, these "amenities" have not been the only ones of this kind committed. . . . My dear friend, when my mind goes back over all I saw in these regions my gorge rises with nausea. I am not suspected of sensitiveness. I have already seen war at close quarters; I have taken part in it, in Morocco and elsewhere, and I realize all that it entails of misery and horror. But in reviewing the methods of the Allies I cannot help thinking of the invasion of the Huns, whose worthy descendants, in fact, they are.

I told you previously that, in spite of the care the Orthodox took to have their atrocities attributed to the Moslems, one can manage sometimes to witness indubitable examples. Let me explain. I am still referring to Dedeagatch. I shall not go back to the conditions under which the town was taken by a few hundred Bulgarian comitadjis, conditions which I have already described to you and which permitted the Greeks to satisfy their personal hatred (by denouncing "Turkophiles,"

who were immediately massacred by the Bulgars), and especially to pillage, to rob, to assault, etc.

I am only going to relate to you three instances which I have witnessed. . . . I saw myself WITH MY OWN EYES this time:—I was walking on shore with a comrade, both in uniform. At one time we were looking at corpses of Moslems which lay naked on the shore. We were exchanging the remark that there was no doubt they had been killed with bayonets, and from behind as we had been told. Those poor devils must have been running away in the streets and stabbed by the brutes sent after them. A comitadji who was watching us came forward then and said with a sneer: "To be sure, Turk not worth bullet!" The man had such a bandit's air and face that instinctively I felt for my revolver in my pocket.

2. A few hours later in the Turkish town. The Greek jackals had passed, and there was nothing left that bore a name. Here and there women in tears were sitting on the smouldering ruins. All the men had been killed or put to flight. A very old Turkish woman threw herself at our feet, kissing our hands, etc. . . . She told us a story which, even by piecing our

sabir together, we could not succeed in understanding. But it was obvious that she was a prey to strong emotion and that she was imploring us to do something. We signed to her to walk in front of us and we followed her. She took us almost at a run a few hundred yards farther and there we understood. In something which must have been previously a house two young women and a little Turkish girl, their faces uncovered, were crying silently. Close to them two Bulgarian soldiers without their arms and with congested faces were readjusting their clothing, looking unpleasantly surprised at our unexpected arrival. A little boy, pale as a sheet, pointed out the two soldiers to us, shouting a story from which it appeared that he had tried to get the women to run away, but that the soldiers had threatened him with their knives. We escorted all these sobbing people to a safe place, *not without having asked a Bulgarian officer who was passing to take note of the fact.* (He looked annoyed.) What had taken place was only too clear,—and too clear also that we had come too late.

3. The next day, in the afternoon, I was on board looking at the town through the glass of the Barr and Stroud telemetre. You know that

this instrument, used as a telescope, gives, besides a strong magnification, a remarkable outline. Moreover, we were not very far away from land. I saw therefore everything as if I had touched it with my finger. I saw two good old Turkish boatmen chased along the shore by Bulgarian soldiers. The chase lasted quite five minutes. The two boatmen were killed with clubs. I learnt later that they had been discovered in their caiques, where they had remained four days in hiding.

There you are. I stop because such a subject has no limit, and there must be some end to it. I am glad all the same to see that, in spite of the conspiracy of silence of the Press, truth is beginning to be known. But one can never repeat too often what a foul breed these so-called Christian soldiers are,—the Greeks especially. As for the Bulgarians I am prepared to admit that most of the horrors due to them were perpetrated by their comitadjis. But since the regulars do not even disavow them, they are, to my mind, all in the same boat.

Good-bye, my dear friend. Excuse the looseness of this letter, written anyhow. I should have reproached myself had I delayed even for one day to send you my testimony, which I give

you not as a justification, but as a confirmation of what you wrote. It goes without saying that I leave you entirely free to make whatever use you like of it, even to publish it whole and over my signature if you think it preferable. I should also be greatly obliged if you would communicate it to Captain Viaud. I think the attitude he has taken up towards the Turks is really fine, and I should be sorry if he thought one instant that I had indirectly misled him, although I have not the honour to be personally acquainted with him.

I hope, besides, to be able to talk all this over with you very shortly : we shall be in Toulon at the end of the month . . . and very glad too. We have had quite enough of atrocities !

(Signed)—————

P.S.—One more wireless telegram, unfortunately incompletely received owing to the mixing of messages. It is dated November 19, and sent from the *Bruix* to the *Gambetta* for the Embassy: “*Appalling massacres by Bulgar or Greek bands . . . the unhappy Moslem population . . . hundreds of corpses, women, children, horribly mutilated . . . unburied . . . terrible reprisals made by orthodox elements.*” FIFTY WAGON-LOADS OF CORPSES.”

Perhaps it was the Turks who themselves killed their own wives and children, who knows?
X.

There.

I, Claude Farrère, testify to the accuracy of the above text, and I guarantee on my honour as a sailor, the honour and the veracity of the sailor, my correspondent.

For the sake of the good name of the French Press, I hope that there will not be found one single French newspaper to dare to refuse to reprint the essential parts of this overwhelming testimony.

The case is heard.

We know, of the Moslems or the Orthodox, who are the torturers and who are the victims.

And we know also of M. Pierre Loti and of those who insult him, who is the grand, honest man, who are the hired snarlers.

CLAUDE FARRÈRE.

II.

I will now give an extract from a letter which I received this very day from a French nun, the Superior of one of the largest schools of the East, a saintly woman universally known and

respected over there, who has transformed her classrooms into a hospital for the wounded Turks :—

“Our poor Turks, yes, I pity them from the bottom of my heart. We shall never find so much tolerance, so much kindness among those who want to oust them.

“Our wounded have been admirable in their gratefulness and most easy to nurse, etc.”

III.

Letter on the passage of the Allies through Salonica.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE OF THE “DROITS
DE L’HOMME.”

“... The Turks continue to indulge in pillage and all kinds of excesses, in Macedonia as well as in Thrace and the Epirus. . . .”

(*The Agencies.*)

Every two or three days this information crops up again like a *leitmotiv* in all the communications which the telegraphic agencies of Athens, Sofia, and Belgrade send incessantly to the Press of the world which placidly records them. I ask permission to acquaint my French readers with lamentable news which has come straight from

Salonica, Seres, Kavalla and other Macedonian centres, and which shows in a diametrically opposed light the alleged Turkish excesses.

Everybody knows already what happened in Salonica, where the Greek army indulged in a regular sacking of the town. Therefore I shall not insist on those painful events, contenting myself by adding that during the first days of December, in spite of denials forcibly obtained, tranquility was still very far from having returned. The inhabitants of Salonica dared not leave their houses, and in full day-light, to go even no farther than the baker's shop or the grocer's, they had to band themselves together.

At Seres, at the time when the Bulgarians entered the town, a Turk fired twice and killed two soldiers. That was the signal for an appalling massacre, authorised by their chiefs, on the part of the invaders. For twenty-four hours, led by the Orthodox natives, and under the indulgent eye of their officers, the Bulgarian soldiers pillaged, robbed, violated, massacred, intoxicated with blood and plunder. More than *fifteen hundred* Moslems fell victims to this unprecedented carnage. Of course the Jews were not spared. One of them, M. H. Florentin, had his house invaded by a bloodthirsty horde

who seized his valuables and destroyed everything that could not be carried away.

At Kavalla, the atrocities were not so terrible, but the acts of savagery were no less atrocious. The number of Moslem notables slaughtered like sheep was no less than a hundred and fifty. The Austro-Hungarian Consul, M. Adolf Wix, only escaped by taking refuge on board one of the Lloyd vessels. In connivance with the Bulgarian police, three voïvods presented themselves at midnight at the houses of the rich Jewish dealers in tobacco. In spite of prayers, supplications, and offers of all kinds from the weeping women, the comitadjis carried away six householders, of whom one suffered from asthma, another from rheumatism, and a third from obesity; they took them to Yeni-Keuy under a torrential rain—a six hours' journey. The unhappy men were only released two days later against a ransom of £T22,000 (£20,000 sterling). The voïvods, authors of this act of brigandage, were apparently the companions of Tchernopeiev, the present Kaimakam of Kavalla.

At Drama, at Nusretli, in the region of Xanthi, at Demir-Hissar, and almost everywhere wherever the "Crusaders" have hunted

the followers of the Crescent, the same scenes took place under the benevolent eye of the officers, almost with their consent, perhaps even under their orders. *Seventy thousand* Moslems have thus been massacred by the conquerors, who have sworn to exterminate Islam, to extirpate its very root.

The most revolting feature is the attitude of the Orthodox Ottoman subjects who act as informers to the victors.

Is it not time for the Press, the Fourth Estate, to ask for a little pity, a little Christian charity, for so many innocents, so many widows, so many orphans, whose only crime is to have been born Moslems.

SAM. LEVY.

(Late Editor of the *Journal de Salonique*.)

IV.

*Letter from a Frenchman residing in
Constantinople.*

Constantinople,

December 8, 1912.

On Tuesday, November 19th, at about eight o'clock in the evening, 'a hundred and fifty

comitadjis suddenly entered the town of Bedefatch.

Until midnight those comitadjis indulged in a most appalling massacre of the Turks; they penetrated into the houses, looting, and killing women, children and aged men.

The complicity of the Christians (Orthodox) is not to be doubted: we have seen many who led the brigands pointing out to them the Turkish houses and the Turkish people.

Besides, all the Christian houses were marked with a white cross to show that they were to be spared.

Some Moslems had sought refuge in a Mosque; they were only aged men, women and children.

The Bulgarians surrounded them. From the door ajar a revolver shot was heard; immediately a volley was directed against these unhappy people, bombs were thrown into the Mosque; it was a veritable carnage.

The next day when I visited the scene of this disaster I found more than twenty-five corpses.

* * * * *

The Italian Catholic Priests, who have a school where French is taught, had received some thirty Turks who had sought shelter with them. They

were denounced by the Greeks who, being Orthodox, hate the Catholic schools, whose development had been until that time facilitated by the tolerance of the Turks.

The Bulgars presented themselves at the School and demanded that the refugees be handed over : the Fathers refused ; but one of the leading Turks, named Riza bey, Commissary of the Ottoman Government to the *Compagnie Francaise des Chemins de fer*, fearing that their hospitality might bring serious trouble on the Fathers, surrendered spontaneously to the brutes.

They took him away. At about fifty yards from the Italian School I saw them stop, threaten Riza bey with their bayonets ; they demanded that he should give them his money and indicate to them his own house.

Riza bey, whom I knew, was a well-educated young man who came of a very good family, had a wife and child. The thought of the danger that his family would run prompted him, I have no doubt, to refuse to obey the summons of the bandits, who thereupon pierced him with their bayonets. The unhappy man collapsed ; he was dead. One of his murderers took his boots away for himself, and his body remained for five days on the same spot ; every day they took one piece

of clothing from him ; at the end only the shirt and underclothing were left.

* * * *

The Bulgarian comitadjis then returned to the Italian Fathers and threatened to kill them if they did not show them their safe. They had perforce to submit : the safe contained a hundred Turkish pounds, which the bandits took away.

By the side of these Bulgars there were the inhabitants of the Greek persuasion, who invaded the Turkish houses, the Mosques, the Government offices, and carried away everything they could lay their hands upon, furniture, carpets, bed-clothes, etc. . . .

. . . . The pillage lasted eight days, that is until the moment when the French flag was perceived in the horizon ; that was our armoured cruiser the *Jurien-de-la-Gravière* ; then, as if by enchantment, the comitadjis disappeared and security returned. The Greeks, upon the arrival of the Balkan troops, had shown themselves suddenly overbearing towards the foreigners, insulting the Austrian Vice-Consul, M. Bergouillon, agent of the Lloyd Company, threatening nothing short of shutting the European establishments, banks, etc., to replace them by Greek concerns.

It is my duty to pay homage to the Greek Bishop of Dedeagatch, who used in these sad circumstances his energy and his authority in order to protect the Turks against pillage by his own followers. He succeeded thus in rescuing the Kaimakan and many Turks, but he was hardly listened to, and he threatened to leave his co-religionists and countrymen immediately after the end of the hostilities, "not wishing to remain," said he, "at the head of so infamous a community."

On the arrival of the French cruiser the courageous prelate decided to go on board to welcome the captain; the latter, in order to thank him and congratulate him upon his attitude, fired in his honour a salute of many guns.

. . . The Bulgarian army, which had left the town to the mercies of the comitadjis, returned to Dedeagatch as soon as the French cruiser arrived. The captain, seeing the town would be henceforth occupied by regulars, thought it useless to land any sailors, and sailed for Kavalla.

At Kavalla horrors similar to those of Dedeagatch had been committed. At Dedeagatch, however, the French officers had time to land and to note the abominations perpetrated; they even took some photographs.

The Bulgarian army was at Dedeagatch under the orders of General Gueneff.

The Italian Fathers complained to him of the odious treatment they had received at the hands of the comitadjis. The General held an enquiry, ascertained the facts, and even found seventy Turkish pounds of the hundred which had been stolen from them.

“But,” General Gueneff told them, “as we intend to erect a monument in honour of the Bulgarian soldiers who died during the war, I keep this money towards that purpose.”

This same General Gueneff, having heard that the Greek Bishop had given shelter in the Greek school to all the Turkish women, in order to protect them against ill-treatment, succeeded in persuading that prelate to turn them out to make room for his men.

The unhappy women had to return to their pillaged and desolate houses, and, in the night, left without protection, they were violated by the soldiers of this General.

The second night after their arrival the same soldiers of General Gueneff pillaged the warehouses of M. Rodhe, the German Vice-Consul and the agent of the Schenker Transport Company.

The Bulgarians placed sentries in front of each Consulate, with orders to prevent anyone from entering. Thus, in spite of the energetic protests of the French and German Consuls, the Consular Agents were like prisoners, deprived of all communication with their Nationals and their "Protected," and unable to fulfil their functions and duties.

Owing to the hostility of the native Greek population, *many of us Frenchmen* joined ourselves together to take common measures of defence in case of attack. Fortunately the *Jurien-de-la-Gravière*, warned, arrived in time to impose respect and to transmit to us the order from the Ambassador to return to Constantinople.

The Bulgarians have also taken possession of the French railway, brutally expelled all the native and French staff, and replaced them by Bulgarians. The military authorities refused to give to the French agents any receipt or official document with reference to the taking possession of the material.

(Signed) X——.

(Communicated by M. J. Odelin, of *L'Oeuvre*.)

V.

Letter from a French Missionary.

MACEDONIAN MISSION,

R———,

November 21, 1912.

. . . At last I have news from Yenidjè.

As soon as the Greeks entered it they began to burn the Tcharchi (Turkish covered market) and the Turkish houses. But previously all the "good Christians" (Orthodox from Yenidjè) had commenced to pillage in a disgusting fashion; shops and Turkish houses, everything was ransacked. This took place on the Saturday afternoon, the Sunday, the Monday and longer, accompanied by the firing of the houses. The rich were no less keen on the booty than the poor, everyone took what he could get, some to the value of twenty-five Turkish pounds, some of five hundred.

There are at Yenidjè a few hundred Greek soldiers. They behave as at Salonica, they break into the houses, rob, ransack and violate. It is, besides, what they have done in every village round Yenidjè, wherever they have been.

They show themselves most fanatical, reserving all their favours for those who belong to the Greek religion and treating the others shamefully; to those of the Greek persuasion they paid for what they had commandeered, but they took eighty-six sheep from a poor Bulgarian (schismatic) of Yenidjè without payment or promise.

* * * * *

Greeks and Bulgars are behaving like barbarians in Macedonia; and that will certainly make a disagreeable impression in Europe when it is known.

Everything went well at Paliortsi, but in the neighbourhood the Christians (Orthodox) of the villages behaved like savages.

At Bogdantsi the Christians ransacked the Turkish houses, snatching the ornaments from the women, cutting off the lobes of their ears for the sake of their ear-rings, then violating the wives and young girls. At Pobregovo the men of Bogdantsi and Stoyakovo invaded the place, and, while some gave themselves up to pillage, the others violated women of all ages, and these were Christians!

Moreover, M. M—— writes to me that the women who, after the massacre of the men of Rayanovo, had been sheltered at Tolni-Todorak,

have been killed, and that, according to one version, only three are left; according to another, nine.

It is unnecessary to say that all these victims are Turkish.

At Dolni-Poroy the Turks were massacred.

At Vaisli all the Turkish population was killed.

At Rukuch the executions continue, and there are about ten Turks killed every day.

* * * * *

After this let the European newspapers, *La Croix*, *l'Univers*, and others write dithyrambs to the glory of the Balkan peoples and talk of Crusades, of Cross *versus* Crescent!

Here everybody is disgusted. Let us hope that Europe will open her eyes in the end; for these men are indulging to their hearts' content in plunder, lechery and murder at the present time in Macedonia, *and it is (Orthodox) Christians who vie with each other.*

What troubles us is the future.

What will the fate of Macedonia be?

Greek or Bulgar? Please God neither, for that would mean the ruin of our French mission.

You know the Greeks; they will not rest until they have destroyed our missions, for they cannot tolerate the Uniates.

What happens in Bulgaria even for the Roman Catholics is not very encouraging, and what takes place in Greece is much worse. That is why we desire so strongly the autonomy of Macedonia, even if this means becoming Austrian. This might not be to our personal advantage, but it would ensure the safety of the mission, of Catholicism, and even of the French influence.

(Signed) D——.

(Communicated by M. J. Odelin, of *l'Ouvrre*.)

VI.

(From the Austro-Hungarian Consulate on the entry of the Servians into Prizrend, on November 5th last.)

Shortly after the Servian troops had entered the town we heard the firing of the infantry in the streets. M. Prochaska then said to me with indignation: "It is treachery. The Servians are now firing on the inhabitants, who have done nothing to them."

In the Consulate there were, besides the Consul, his secretary, two *kawas*, an Italian merchant, a German subject and two Austrian

travellers. There were also twenty-two wounded, eighteen families from the town, several ladies who had undertaken to nurse the wounded, and a good many children.

A section of Servian soldiers, led by an officer on horseback, appeared at the Consulate. The officer asked to speak to the Consul. M. Prochaska then came to the door. The chief renewed to him the order to open the Consulate, in order to place there the wounded Servian soldiers, and to allow of the searching for Turkish traitors who might have taken refuge there.

Politely, but firmly, M. Prochaska answered that the hospital was already full of wounded. The officer retorted: "Yes, it is full of wretched Albanians, and those we shall throw out."

The Consul replied: "Gentlemen, I will have you notice that the ground on which the Consulate stands is neutral ground, and enjoys the protection of the Monarchy which I represent. *You can see the Austrian flag flying over these walls, and also the symbol of the International Red Cross.*"

The Servian retorted: "These are useless words. I command you to open."

M. Prochaska gave no answer to this, and re-entered his office. The Servian officer ordered

his soldiers to break forcibly into the Consulate. With cheering and shouts of insult against Austria-Hungary, the soldiers tore down the Austro-Hungarian flag and dragged it through the mud. The door was violently opened, the soldiers scaled the wall and entered the building. *The Albanian families who had taken refuge there were killed without mercy. It was the same with the wounded, who were massacred in their beds. The women and children were killed."*

There were Servians who went as far as to *defile corpses*.

The Consul protested solemnly. The Servians answered with sneers.

(Communicated by M. J. Odelin, of *l'Oeuvre*.)

VII.

Letter from a Frenchman residing in Constantinople.

"I have just," he says, "traversed the region between Demir - Hissar, Séres and Salonica. The spectacle is horrible. I have seen on the road more than a thousand corpses of Turkish peasants—men, women, children, aged people—massacred by the Christians."

VIII.

Letter addressed to M. J. Odelin, who, in l'Oeuvre, has so valiantly fought for fair-play, by M. Lucien Maurouard, Minister Plenipotentiary, who was for twenty years a French Diplomat in the East.

Paris,

January 2, 1913.

SIR,—Owing to the fact that the Turks are more given to agriculture than to industrial and financial activities, the Ottoman Empire is chosen land for the development of foreign economic interests.

It is now many centuries since, under the protection of the Capitulations, our commercial houses were established in the sea-ports of the Levant, prospering there in security, and to-day mines, ports, quays, lighthouses, railways, financial *régies*, banks, factories and other undertakings have been set on foot in that Empire under the direction of our French technical personnel and with the help of our capital.

For a long time, also, our missions, our schools (sectarian and non-sectarian) have propagated in most towns our teaching and our influence

under the shelter not only of complete tolerance but also of real privileges.

In the case of incidents damaging to foreign persons or property, we know how much the protection of these interests, and the granting of indemnities, if the case arises, are facilitated for the diplomatic and Consular authorities by the régime of the Capitulations.

So much for the past ; and now for the future.

The situation in the territories detached from the Empire by the formation and increase of the Balkan States is, and will doubtless be, somewhat different.

These young nations show themselves, and they have a right to be, of course, animated by an ardent Nationalism, with more or less exclusive tendencies, and which is certainly less propitious than the Moslem mentality and habits to the penetration of foreign interests.

It is notorious that the Orthodox Cross, which presides religiously and politically over the destinies of the Balkan States, is definitely adverse to the Catholic Cross and seeks to oust it as much as possible.

I have noticed this during a sojourn of fourteen years in Greece.

The protocolary reservation formulated by

France in the treaties for the formation of the Kingdom of Greece, and the annexation of the Ionian Islands, are evaded by the Hellenic authorities on points of vital importance: the acknowledgment and standing of certain Latin bishops, and the statute of mixed marriages.

The very fact that they are excellently kept ensures to the Catholic schools numerous and distinguished attendance; they are, therefore, more or less envied, which, combined with the influence of confessional antagonism makes them sometimes the butt of Press attacks and administrative vexations under fallacious pretexts.

It seems to me also that our commercial and industrial interests can but lose by the substitution of the Turkish domination by the Balkan domination.

These data have been generally omitted from what has been published in connection with the conflict in the Near East.

On the other hand, people have largely but undeservedly revived manufactured legends, especially those dealing with massacres and pillage, indiscriminately laid to the sole account of the Turks, with the object apparently of discrediting them at the bar of public opinion. Yet it is averred that the Turk, naturally placid, only

indulges in violence when provoked by rebellion: I have been a witness of this myself in Crete, where acts of violence always had the character of reciprocity between Christians and Moslems.

In the same way in Macedonia it was between the Allies of to-day, rivals nevertheless, enemies of yesterday and probably also of to-morrow, between Bulgarians and Greeks, that a long exchange of acts of barbarism took place, as a means of eviction and intimidation in the cause of political propaganda.

LUCIEN MAUROUARD.

IX.

Letter addressed to me by two highly respectable Frenchmen who had settled in Salonica, and who will be obliged to leave it.

Salonica,

January 19, 1913.

Comparative calm reigns at the present time with the Court Martial and preliminary censorship. And yet how many mean actions still!

The exodus of the Moslem families is almost general. The Israelites in turn are thinking of

leaving. As for ourselves, Frenchmen, many of our people have already lost their situations.

Greeks and Bulgarians are quarrelling over the town.

The Bulgarian, more brutal, will make his yoke felt more inexorably ; the Greek with more hypocrisy. As for France, the admirable spreading of her language, of her industrial and moral influence will be utterly destroyed. Already all official communications, all the sign-boards, all the notices in the railway stations and trains which used to be in French will only be in Greek.

Every day we receive fresh testimony of Bulgarian atrocities. They are beyond all conception. Pregnant women have been disembowelled ; of the Moslem population in this part of Macedonia there remain only the refugees.

As for the Turkish prisoners who were at Salonica, *we see them no longer*. And the Bulgarian officers, closely questioned, are beginning to admit that they have methodically exterminated them.

X.

Letter addressed to me by the French Colonel Malfeyt, who was attached for seven years to the International Gendarmerie of Macedonia.

I have lived seven years among the Turks; at Salonica, Monastir, and Uskub, among all classes of society and especially among soldiers; that will tell you how well I know them and consequently how I love them.

During the years I served in Macedonia I never witnessed or heard speak of crimes committed by Turks, and I believe that not a single one could be adduced, a single one *proved*, whilst I can quote by the dozen crimes committed by Balkan people. The Ottoman authorities continually despatched troops to bring to reason the bands of Greeks, Servians or Bulgarians, who were always killing each other, fomenting trouble and keeping the country in a state of anarchy. Are these repressions what they call massacres? In that case I also have contributed to the hunting down of these bands.

In Asia Minor is there not perfect *peacefulness*? During the two years that I traversed the country I have never heard tell of murder or theft! One can sleep there with open doors!

Nevertheless, there are a great many Greeks and foreigners ; *but there is no Power that pursues a policy of annexation.*

Yes, our injustice to the Turks is revolting. These people, so good, so kind-hearted, so dignified, deserve nothing but our esteem.

COLONEL MALFEYT.

XI.

*Letter addressed to me by a Roumanian from
Bukarest.*

How well one can see that you know the Turks,—with whom we Roumanians have rubbed elbows for centuries,—these Turks whom the vicissitudes of Time have made our masters for many years, but who, an incredible and unparalleled thing, have never been hated in our country, so good and just they were and so much they respected their word once passed.

Roumania will bear you in future grateful affection for the appeal to justice, for the indignant protests which you are throwing in the face of Europe like a shameful stigma.

DEMETRIUS RACOVICIANO.

XII.

Letter addressed to me by a French Captain who served for eleven years in the International Gendarmerie of Macedonia.

Your plea in favour of our Turkish friends has a very deep echo in their heart, which is a heart of gold as you know. The good you do in this way to the French cause repairs the damage which our Press, sold to the victors, has done to our influence. You will maintain in spite of it in the hearts of the insulted victims the love of our country, while the victors of to-day will deny us to-morrow.

CAPTAIN X.

XIII.

Letter addressed to me by a Turk from Constantinople.

Our hearts bleed at the thought that in our misfortune insults come to us from noble France, whom we have learned to love from our earliest childhood, first at our mothers' knee, then at the French schools established in our towns and villages; it is with your literature that we always stimulate our intelligence. Well, Sir, you would

scarcely credit it ; in spite of the insults of the *Temps* and of a great number of your newspapers we cannot cease to love France, our second Fatherland, and the thought that, in case of war with Germany, she might again be vanquished would fill me with the same sorrow and grief that I feel now for my own country.

X. BEY.

XIV.

Letter addressed to me by a group of young Jewish girls from Constantinople.

We are little Turkish Jewesses, and we share all the sufferings borne so courageously by our Moslem countrymen. Yes, in spite of what our enemies may say, the true Turks can be proud of having valiantly defended themselves and of having safeguarded their honour. Yes, in spite of all, Turkey will remain our Fatherland, the country that gave refuge to us Israelites with such generosity !

We are happy to find in you a defender of this country against which are levelled so many unjust accusations.

(Here follow the names of five young girls.)

XV.

Letter addressed to me by a leading French Engineer.

How very right you are to lift your voice in favour of this race, so fine and good : the Turks ! I speak their language, I have lived twelve years among them, in Macedonia, in Anatolia, in Arabia. If it is a fact that the virtues indicate and mark the religion of men, in the East the best Christian is the Turk.

Like you, I have been hurt by the ignominious legends spread broadcast against our unhappy friends. My eyes have filled with tears at the undeserved misfortunes that are befalling them. After your first appeal I tried to raise my voice ; but of course no newspaper published my complaints. Nevertheless, I will try again with ardour, almost with anger. The resentment I have felt against my kin has been appeased by your book. It seemed to me then that I was myself less impotent.

B . . .

Chief Engineer.

XVI.

GERMAN PRESS.

Kreuzzeitung, February 4.

*Editorial over the signature of Theodor
Schumann.*

The bands that follow the Bulgarian and Servian troops, the Comitadjis, are gathering everywhere like hyenas; woe to anyone who falls into their hands! To our satisfaction, Italy has taken the initiative to demand that an enquiry be held on the subject of the atrocities which have been committed on the soil of Albania, Macedonia and Thrace. Sir Edward Grey, faced with a question put to him on the subject in the House of Commons, took refuge behind a plea of ignorance, although his duty should have been to know. Besides, England is not in the habit of remaining silent when it is a question of attacks against the very foundations of human morality.

Doctor Ernst Jaeckh has published a book entitled: *Germany in the East after the Balkan War* (Martin Möricke, Munich, 1913). He has in that rendered the service of bringing to light,

thanks to the communications from trustworthy witnesses, the deeds which, to the shame of humanity, have been perpetrated in the course of this dreadful war. We cannot refrain from quoting a few culled from the narratives of German witnesses : officials, clergymen, etc. . . . There exist, besides, official documents and photographs which confirm our assertions.

“The conduct of the Bulgarians,” we read in a German letter, “is ten times worse than anything the Turks can have committed ; one might think that we had returned to the times of the Huns or to the most terrible periods of the Thirty Years’ War. It is always the same story ; the men found in the villages and towns are massacred without mercy, their wives and daughters are violated, the villages are pillaged and burned, and the inhabitants that have been spared by the bullets die of hunger and cold.”

Moreover here is an example :

“In the village of Petropo, two young girls were violated under the eyes of their mother . the latter, unable to bear this sight, seized a rifle and fired. That was the signal for a veritable deluge of blood. All the women and the young girls were gathered together and shut in the

village café, which was set on fire. All perished in the flames amid heartrending cries."

This case is quite typical. In certain places they had the impudence to give their victims Christian (! ! !) baptism before massacring them. In the village of Esehkeli, near Kilikich, they buried ten young girls alive.

An Austrian lady writes from Kavalla to her brother :

"People who had committed no other crime than that of being Moslems, and who were among the notabilities of the town, were thrown into jail and treated, without legal proceedings, in the most cruel fashion. At midnight the prisoners were awakened, divested of their clothing, tied together in threes, pierced with bayonets and felled with rifle-butts. On the first night thirty-nine were executed, on the second night fifteen, etc. . . . At Seres the Turks took to defending themselves and shot two soldiers. Immediately the officer who commanded them pulled out his watch, and said : "It is now four o'clock ; until to-morrow at four deal with the Turks as you like." These wild beasts massacred during those twenty-four hours 1,200 Turks according to some, 1,900 according to others. . . ."

Without doubt King Ferdinand's call to a Crusade is the cause of these atrocities. Colonel Veit relates that the Comitadjis have burnt all the Moslem places between Chataldja and Adrianople.

“Not a single house, a single hut is to be seen to-day; everything has vanished in the flames. Thousands of ruined families have emigrated, taking their few belongings, placing them together with their wives and children in buffalo-carts. They are at the present time near Constantinople, tormented by hunger. They do not complain, they do not beg and they feed miserably on a few grains of maize. At Buyuk Kardistan I have myself seen dozens of wounded Turks whom the routed troops had failed to take with them, and whom the Bulgarian patrols had mutilated horribly. We officers have already repeatedly said to war correspondents: “The news of all this should be proclaimed all over the world in letters of fire. . . .”

On the contrary, all reports praise the Turks; such are those of Captain Rein and Professor Dühring. The latter, speaking of the Turks, refers to them as an “honest and brave people,” and concludes in these words: “They are not

yet ripe for European civilization. Let us hope, nevertheless, that Turkey will be allowed to rise again in Asia Minor, for the Turks deserve it for their qualities: they are pious, faithful, honest, simple and brave." Captain Rein, for his part, summarizes his opinion in the words of Bismarck: "The Turk is the only gentleman in the Near East."

When we think of all the atrocities perpetrated, of which we can only quote an insignificant part, we understand the call of Dr. Jaekkh: "Is there, then, no will in Europe, no hand stretched out in favour of humanity, no voice raised on behalf of civilization? And yet the incidents that have taken place are established by reliable documents, by photographs, etc. . . ."

It seems impossible to us that public opinion should not exert itself and that the initiative taken by Italy should remain without echo. It is in vain that Russia makes every effort to hide the crimes of her Servian and Bulgarian protégés. It is in vain that the French Press persists in maintaining silence. It is in vain that Sir Edward Grey remains icily phlegmatic and stops his ears not to hear and his eyes not to see.

XVII.

Translation of a letter sent to Pierre Loti in Turkish by H.I.H. Prince Yusuff Izzeddin, Heir Apparent to the Sultan of Turkey.

MY DEAR M. PIERRE LOTI,

The whole of humanity is witness to the sanguinary drama which has taken place lately in the East, the scene and basis of your works and of your incomparable poems, which are assured of immortality by their generous views and intrinsic beauty. Fumes, mists rising from innocent blood, shed savagely in torrents, have darkened the clear and limpid sky, which you were wont to admire in the past. Lamentations have taken the place of the warbling of birds. While massacres and horrors occur incessantly in Rumelia, on the very confines of Europe, whose ears are closed to these calamities and upheavals, you alone, with a few friends of humanity and civilization like yourself, have raised your voice in favour of right and truth. Your pen has become a standard in the fight for justice. You have rent the darkness in twain, given light to the men of conscience and faith. I am sure that one day the whole civilized world will

group itself under the folds of your flag of right and truth. Neither my country nor I myself will ever forget your noble and generous sentiments and your fight for the sake of humanity. We shall venerate and glorify you eternally, as a man of justice and wisdom.

YUSUFF IZZEDDIN.

XVIII.

Pierre Loti's Answer to the Turkish Heir-Apparent.

HIGHNESS,

I am moved more than words can tell by the gratefulness shown me by Turkey and of which I have now found high and sovereign confirmation in the letter which your Imperial Highness has done me the honour to write to me. This letter I will preserve among my most precious possessions, and my sons, whose legacy it will be, will maintain after me, I trust, the same attachment that I have for my second Fatherland in the East.

Nevertheless, I did not deserve any thanks ; for it would have been impossible for me not to act as I have ; I have followed in all simplicity the prompting of my heart ever faithful to the

noble Turkish nation. I have obeyed the impulse of my indignant conscience and I have felt proud, when, in consequence, I was made the butt of insults and threats, because I had denounced so many crimes.

My efforts have not been in vain. There is in my country an immense majority of people of heart and sense whose good faith had been abused by shameless calumnies, by official lies—even by official “denials.” It was sufficient for me to enlighten them to draw them again to our dear and unhappy Turkey. I have won back many, as is proved by hundreds of letters which are reaching me and also by articles in the independent Press. I am happy to add, moreover, that I have been seconded in my task by *all* my countrymen who have lived in the East and who know the Turks otherwise than through abject and childish legends. I will keep up the struggle as if my own country was in question. But this small current of sympathy which I may, perhaps, have succeeded in creating will count, alas, for very little compared with the appalling calamities which are befalling Islam on all sides and which cruelly wound me!

I have, etc.,

• PIERRE LOTI.

XIX.

Letter from the Grand Vizier to Pierre Loti.

SUBLIME PORTE,

GRAND VIZARAT,

February 16, 1913.

DEAR SIR,

While all Europe and the hired Press had decided to shut their eyes to the atrocities and slaughter organised by the Balkan Allies your noble voice made itself heard undertaking the defence of the oppressed.

I thank you warmly for your performance of this fine task, which you have undertaken in the name of humanity.

I like to hope that there will be found in France noble hearts which, remembering the secular friendship of the two nations, will hasten to imitate your grand example and join their efforts to yours in order to put a stop to the systematic extermination of the peaceful population of the provinces occupied by the Allies.

I have, etc.,

MAHMUD CHEVKET,

Grand Vizier.

Answer of Pierre Loti.

HIGHNESS,

How deeply I am touched by the letter you have been kind enough to write to me ! Nothing could have been more precious to me than this sign of appreciation.

My voice, however, has had very little power, alas ! to brand as they should have been so many hypocritical crimes committed in the name of the Cross. But what can one do with the Government of one's country, almost all the Press—and nearly the whole of public opinion, arrayed against one and prepared long beforehand by crafty calumnies !

At least, I shall have given your countrymen the assurance that they retain among us the unswerving sympathy, "documented sympathy," of all those who are acquainted with them, who have lived in the East and who know the truth. Perhaps, at the same time, I shall have served my country somewhat also to the best of my ability, by proclaiming that all Frenchmen, thank God, are not of those who approve of the merciless extermination of a noble, vanquished race.

I have, etc.,

PIERRE LOTI.

XX.

Document sent to the Gil Blas by M. Robert Duyal.

The Deputy Governor of the Island of Lemnos brings to the knowledge of the Sublime Porte that events of extreme gravity have recently taken place.

The Hellenic military authorities are actually proceeding in the villages of Lera and Strati to revise the law cases which have been binding for twenty or thirty years and to pronounce new arbitrary judgments in favour of the Greeks, with the sole purpose of terrorizing the Moslems, whom they exterminate after having subjected them to flogging until they draw blood. Those who succeeded in escaping the massacres are in the dire necessity of abandoning their homes in order to save their lives.

The Sheikh of the Dervishes at Seres, Aghiagh effendi, also informs his superiors that, after the occupation of that town by the Bulgarians, thousands of Moslems were massacred, many men and women constrained by violence to embrace the Orthodox faith, a number of young girls kidnapped and sent over to Bulgaria, houses pillaged and ransacked,

cemeteries and mausoleums profaned and the precious objects carried away.

Similarly, the official in charge of the religious foundations in the Island of Mitylene acquaints the responsible Ministry that all the mausoleums and the Moslem tombs have been pillaged and ransacked by the Greek soldiers. The chief of the Moslem community in Khios has also declared to the Imperial authorities of the Aidin vilayet that the same profanations have been committed in cold blood in the island after the Greek occupation.

Again the Governor of Lemnos informs the Sublime Porte, in one of his reports, that the following Ottoman officials have been assassinated in the most ferocious manner by the Greek soldiers and officers in the Port of Mondurós:—

Assaf bey, clerk of the Court ; Salin effendi, commander of the port ; Mahmud effendi, farmer of taxes ; Chukri effendi, a notable of Monduros ; Hussein effendi, postal official ; Ahmed effendi, official of the land bank ; finally Ibrahim effendi, a notable of Lemnos, *assassinated by mistake in place of his brother.*

The said Governor adds that he learnt also from a private and authentic source that twelve other persons, notables and officials in the

islands in the neighbourhood of Lemnos, have been in the same way taken to the port of Dunduros, and cowardly murdered at the same time as the above-mentioned.

People will still speak of Turkish atrocities !

ROBERT DUVAL.

XXI.

Letter addressed to me by a Roumanian Engineer.

We know here for certain, that during this war the Allies have massacred not only the Moslem population, but also peaceful Roumanian people. They have closed the Roumanian churches and schools, burned books and the Gospels printed in Roumanism, imprisoned and murdered the Roumanian priests and teachers. The tortures to which these unhappy people were submitted are beyond belief. The Roumanian teacher Demetrius Cecina (read Tjicina), director of the schools in Turia, was summoned by an official letter and killed in an atrocious fashion ; first they cut out his tongue, then they pulled out his hair, then they opened every vein in his body. The corpse of this unhappy man was thrown on to the bank of a river, a prey to the vagrant dogs.

The widow and the children of this martyr are now in Bukarest, and one can obtain from them confirmation of these atrocities through any trustworthy person—for instance the French Minister at Bukarest, etc., etc. . . .

At Klebi-Cliscera the Greeks have burned 250 Roumanian houses and the Roumanian church of St. Nicholas. The Roumanian schools were burned also. The Roumanians George Galbadjari, N. Maugrosi and Kan Caracuta were also killed.

DANIEL KLEIN

(Engineer of Woods and Forests).

XXII.

Fragment of a letter written to me by a notable Turk of the town of Brusa.

. . . . As you know, during the Turko-Russian war it was also the Montenegrins, these mutilators of noses and ears, who threw themselves forward first, taking by surprise at the first engagement the Turkish regulars, torturing them, cutting their faces until they looked like orang-outangs. Europe was then better disposed towards the poor Turks, as is shown by the fact that the photographs (which represented about twenty of these disfigured people, which I

had sent to the press in order to edify the public) found a place in the *Graphic*, the well-known English periodical. The other newspapers, however, said nothing about it.

It would still be easy to find at Abdulla Brothers', photographers at Pera, the negatives of these photographs. But in case this would not be possible, would there be found in France an illustrated newspaper to reproduce a group of old men, still alive, some of those who, during the Turko-Russian war, were abominably disfigured by the same savage brutal Montenegrins?

XXIII.

*Fragments of the letter addressed to me by the
Turkish National Defence League.*

And when we remained stupefied at our abandonment by France, whom we had learned to love, you it was who reminded us that outside and above this new France, mercenary, grasping and pleasure-loving, blinded by the reflection of her golden fetish, there still lives the France whom we know, the intellectual and moral France, the real France who, for many centuries, has patiently built up her greatness upon noble traditions of justice, honour and noble solidarity

It is to her that the arrogant financiers owe their existence. It is of her prestige that they take advantage when, under the empire of the blinding passion of greed, they prostitute to low appetites the fruit of her work, which she entrusted to them in order to promote the extension of her civilizing influence and the moral and material lifting up of the less fortunate nations.

This France, often distant, distracted by intellectual effort, is ignorant of the abuses practised in her name. It was you again this time who, at the head of a small group of friends devoted to the cause of right, assumed the task of waking her.

When she awakes, when she has torn away the veil of lies, of calumnies, which covered her eyes, and when, in all their hideous reality, she contemplates the indescribable crimes perpetrated in the name of the Cross, emblem of brotherly love, quivering with indignation and horror she will not hesitate, we are sure, to raise her voice and to make the weight of her anger felt by those who forget that the motto "Force primes Right" is not hers, that she is jealous of her high traditions, etc., etc.

(Signed) HOULOSSI
(President of the Ottoman
National Defence League).

XXIV.

*Letter addressed to me by a Polish student from
the Vienna University.*

When the Poles, after three desperate insurrections, were definitely beaten, they took refuge in France, and especially in Turkey, where they were received with admirable generosity. And yet Poland it was, of all the European nations, who had done most harm to Turkey, especially during the war of 1683. The generosity with which the Turks welcomed us is an unparalleled example. Yet the Sultan at the time, Abdul-Medjid, by thus protecting the Polish refugees, ran the risk of a terrible war.

Your book brought us such great consolation that I cannot express it. The Director of our University, an aged and respected man, who has lived for twenty years among the Turks, cried out almost in tears: "Truly he has erected an imperishable monument, not only in the hearts of the Moslems but also in the hearts of all those who know them."

XXV.

Fragment of a letter sent me by a Russian lady.

The photograph* which you reproduce on the cover of your book has stirred up my saddest recollections. I am an old woman, Sir, and in 1877, at the time of that Turkish campaign, which was the first onslaught of an imbecile Europe against these unfortunate Turks, I was serving as a Sister of Mercy under the walls of Plevna. How many poor Turks have I not seen brought in in very much the same state as the original of the photograph which you reproduce! They had been mutilated by Servian, Bulgarian and Montenegrin bands, especially by those atrocious Montenegrins who carried as a Cross of Honour hanging from their belts the ears of Turks they had tortured before putting them to death! This is forgotten, as also the resignation of their victims who had strength of will enough to refrain from cursing them. And all these

* This refers to the illustration on the cover of the French edition which represents a Turkish officer captured by the Allies and sent back to his camp with his lips, ears and nose cut off. This atrocity occurred at the beginning of the Balkan War, near the Montenegrin frontier, and has been vouched for by irrefutable witnesses.—TRANSLATOR.

atrocities were practised in the name of the Christian religion, in honour of the Cross of Christ! etc., etc. . . .

XXVI.

Letter addressed to me by a French Naval officer on his return from a cruise in the Levant.

I was brought up on the classics, and I was full of admiration for the Greek nation when I arrived for the first time in the Levant in Crete. M. Venizelos was then presiding, with the astuteness and bad faith which you know, over the destinies of the island.

After a stay of two years I have returned, filled with a deep disgust for everything Greek, and intense pity for the good, the gentle, the hospitable Turkish people, oppressed by their own chiefs, spoliated, assassinated by the Orthodox whenever the latter found an occasion. I cannot tell you with what comfort I have heard at last your voice raised to unmask the lies and to invoke pity for these unhappy innocents who are killed, and whose very memory is besmirched.

X.,
Naval Officer

XXVII.

*Letter from a French cleric from Scutari,
published by M. Jean Tharaud in his book :
"LA BATAILLE A SCUTARI."*

. . . . You find me a Turkophile, dear parents. How could I help being so? I have lived among the Turks for twenty-three years and learnt to know the soul of these people, the sterling quality of their hearts, their broad tolerance, their deep faith in God, their respect for authority, their courage, their patriotism. All the French Catholic newspapers may speak of Cross *versus* Crescent; they fail to add that that Cross is as Greek as could be. And really they forget too much that for years Turkey has been giving to our ecclesiastics the bread that France denied them. . . . The lies of a Press, venal or badly informed, will change nothing of this; the Turks wage war like soldiers, the Balkan people like bandits. The newspapers can allude to Turkish atrocities, but the atrocities of the Orthodox States exceed in horror everything that the Turks have done in the past. Letters written by our Brothers in Salonica and Khios, other letters addressed by their parents to

children of our schools, would edify you on the so-called civilization of these petty nations who pretend to be Christians.

XXVIII.

Letter written to me by a notable Frenchman of Salonica.

Salonica, March 21, 1913.

On Tuesday, the 18th inst., at about 4.30 p.m., King George of Greece, returning from one of his customary walks, was mortally wounded by a revolver bullet fired by a man out of his mind. An aide-de-camp was with His Majesty. Two Cretan gendarmes followed at some distance.

The assassin, arrested at once, was questioned by a Greek officer. Here are the actual words of this officer: "The assassin speaks our tongue too purely not to be an Hellene." In effect he admitted his name was Alexander Shinas, and that he was Greek and a professor. These things are known to you. *What you probably do not know, what at least they have carefully hidden, are the scenes that followed.*

Cretan soldiers and gendarmes rushed to the quarter, thirsting for massacre and slaughter,

which seems to be the greatest delight of the Balkan nations. I saw three people murdered under my eyes, one being a poor old negro beggar. The officers told those who wore a fez to take it off, for they had lost control of their men. At the balconies the Greek ladies were shouting: "Kill them, kill them!" The lowest estimate puts the victims at a hundred.

The parents of a pupil of the girls' class of the lay mission and of a boy from the college, both Mussulmans, were assassinated. The latter's father, Kapendî effendi, failing to return home, his distracted wife ran to every police-station, where they received her with sarcasm, saying that her husband was resting in a safe place. This victim was very well known, a notable of the town, and was taken a long distance to hide the proofs of the crime.

The next day the newspapers—by order—stated that the Cretan Gendarmerie had been admirable during that terrible evening.

Hypocrisy and cruelty.

Preliminary censorship and impossibility of establishing the truth.

Here are *new* facts—if I may say so—and absolutely verified.

XXIX.

*Official documents verified and published in the
GIL BLAS in the first instance.*

180 TURKISH PEASANTS BURNT ALIVE.

Without even mentioning the 5,000 Bulgarian soldiers of General Kordatcheff who, on Saturday, October 27th, shot down 5,120 Moslems, and would have killed even the Orthodox but for the intervention of the Metropolitan, let us recall the events of Kulkund.

At Kulkund in the *casa* of Avret-Hissar, the Turkish villagers were summoned by the Bulgarians of Montul under the pretext of inscribing them in a register. It was a Tuesday, a fortnight after the occupation. They were taken to a *djami* (mosque). There the Bulgarian comitadjis, accompanied by Bulgarian peasants divided the Turks into groups of eight persons and, having gathered straw soaked in paraffin, set fire to them.

The number of Turks burnt in the place was a hundred and eighty persons.

Then the Bulgarians burned two hundred young boys, and took away fifty-eight young Moslem girls to the village of Montul.

Only sixty families of Kulkund escaped that massacre.

Similar incidents took place at Paroy-Zir, Poroy-Bala, Orgamli, Reyan Durlan, Zchirnal, Dedeagatch, Strumnitza, Garnach-Zir, Zi'oran, etc.

The villagers of Petritch, Menlek, Demir-Hissar, Angista, Vilasta, Kutta, Chilian were exterminated.

The Bulgarian and other Balkan armies seem to have been bent upon a systematic extermination of all the Islamic peasant population.

In the districts of Seres, Kavalla and Demir-Hissar, over 70,000 Moslems were tortured and massacred under the eye of the Bulgarian officers.

XXX.

I received from a group of Salonica Jews the following protest, which is all to the honour of the Israelite race :—

“CHER MAÎTRE,

On page 119* of your book you wrote : ‘Poor Turks, now they are denied even by the Jews of Salonica.’ In the name of all my co-

* Page 126 of the enlarged French edition, and 97 of this translation

religionaries I wish to protest against this assertion. No, the Salonica Jews have not denied their friends the Turks. The letter to which you allude to prove it, and which the *Temps* hastened to reprint, is the work of a Greek, an official in the Press bureau, who, for the occasion, thought it a clever move to assume a Jewish nose. It appeared in a small Governmental Greek newspaper published in French, founded to attract to Hellenism the Jews who are all of French culture.

No, *Cher maître*, the Jews of this town have not denied the Turks. They have not forgotten that, at a time when all Christendom, leagued by a common bond of hatred, was hounding everywhere their ancestors, who were wandering over the seas in quest of shelter, the Turks opened wide to them the doors of hospitality. No, the Jews of Salonica have not denied their friends the Turks. This petty Greek official has lied. The attitude of the Salonica Jews was heroic at the time when the Greek army entered the town. Risking the worst reprisals on the part of the soldiers, drunk with victory, the Jews, in spite of categorical orders, energetically refused to deck their houses with the Hellenic colours. They maintained a reserve so dignified and so

sincerely sorrowful that they attracted to themselves for many days the hatred and the anger of the populace and the soldiery. Their wives were violated, their houses pillaged; they were ill-treated, imprisoned; and they were threatened during a whole week with wholesale massacre.

• To-day even, after three months of occupation, in spite of pressing offers, of protests of sympathy and earnest friendship, the Greeks could not induce the Jews to deny the Turks. The interview of the Chief Rabbi with the King of Greece, which has been published in all the papers, is evident proof of this. The memory of our people is faithful and tenacious: the impress of gratitude could not be effaced from it."

I do not give the signatures for 'fear of bringing cruel punishment on the writers. '

P. LOTI.

XXXI.

Opinion expressed by Frederic Masson of the Académie Française.

I have been convinced, since I went to the Near East forty-five years ago, that, *without the Turks*, there would not have been, long since, a Roman Catholic left in the Ottoman Empire.

XXXII.

One more of the letters sent me by unknown readers.

I have spent in the East the three best years of my life. There I have been in contact with all races. I can the better say how deeply justified is your sympathy for the Moslems, how true is the judgment which you pronounce on the meanness, the rapacity and the cowardice of the Levantine Christians. *There is unanimous agreement on this point between all those who have lived in Turkey.* I was discussing this the other day with one of your colleagues of the *Institut* who has sojourned a long time over there. His opinion was that, if the Turks have massacred the Armenians, there are very good grounds for their hatred, the least of which are the theft and usury which these people practice to excess against the poor Moslem peasants.

And yet how tranquil it is over there; how free one is among them, far from our false formulæ of liberty! and what security there is at any hour of the night or day, even in the depth of the country!

Thank you for your action, for your attitude

towards our friends the Turks; thank you for having alone in France, in the midst of the croaking of an ignorant or bribed Press, pronounced the words that ought to be pronounced!

M. GROSDIDIER DE MATONS

• (*Licencié-ès-lettres, Professeur d'Histoire*).

THE END.

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